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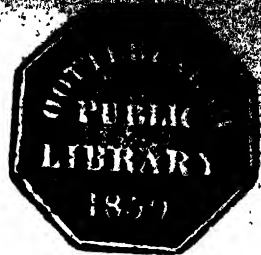
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THE
EDINBURGH REVIEW,

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ART. I.—*Life and Correspondence of David Hume. From the Papers bequeathed by his Nephew to the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and other Original Sources.* By JOHN HILL BURTON, Advocate. 2 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh: 1846.

DAVID HUME was born at Edinburgh in 1711; and died there in 1776. It is worth while to stop for a moment, and recollect what was the state of Scotland at the two periods.

Scotland had been singularly late in cultivating the arts of peace—literature among the rest. In 1711 she was just entering on her new existence. Up to the union of the two crowns, her history is little better than a chronicle of factious outbreaks and ferocious daring; which other parents, as well as Arnold, may often have been unwilling to let their children read—lest the only tales the Grandfathers of Scotland had to tell, should give them too bad an opinion of human nature. Buchanan was her only scholar of note—though she had vernacular poets of no mean mark, in Gawin Douglas, Dunbar, and Sir David Lindsay. The grounds upon which Hume himself finally decided against the authenticity of the *Poems of Ossian* was, the impossibility of any man of sense imagining that they should have been orally preserved, ‘during fifty generations, by the rudest, perhaps, of all European nations; the most necessitous, the most turbulent, and the most unsettled.’ The hundred years which divides the union of the two crowns and that of the two kingdoms, brought with them only a change, or an aggravation, of miseries. Scotland was

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then no place for a man of letters—of humanity. The provincial government of the Stuarts proved as intolerable to Leighton as to Barnet. Leighton at last threw up his bishopric in despair, and withdrew to England; after having declared that he could not concur in planting the Christian religion itself, by such instruments; much less a form of Church government.

Such was the inheritance to which the eighteenth century succeeded. Andrew Fletcher, a classical republican (of the Virginian and Carolinian caste,) was for reducing the body of the people into slavery, as an indispensable foundation for better times. Instead of this administrative experiment, political necessities gave us, providentially, a union of the two kingdoms. The social advantages which have followed in its train, were probably little thought of at the time: But as soon as Scotland had become an integral part of the British Empire, she appears to have at once discovered her latent capabilities and powers; and to have perceived that the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* (their ancient character) might carry them as far in the arts of peace as in those of war. In spite of two Jacobite rebellions, and of the occasional longings, more national than patriotic, of a few impracticable politicians, for a separate parliament, Scotland sprang a-head. During the following century, she not only got far in advance of Ireland, (which lagged behind, swamped in claret and jobbing,) but turned all the great elements of civilization to as fortunate an account as England herself. Hume, when a child, might have gazed, as it spread its sails for its first voyage, on the first Clyde-built vessel ever sent across the Atlantic by Glasgow merchants. But before his death, Glasgow had become one of the first commercial cities in the empire; and a second capital was rising at Edinburgh, to which Hume invited his friends to come and see him, in 'our New Town,' and challenged a comparison with any thing they had seen in any part of the world. An improving agriculture, a rapidly extending trade, and good parochial schools, were converting the self-population of Andrew Fletcher into useful citizens. Under the encouragement of men like Lord Kames and Oswald, (both of them Hume's intimate friends,) the progress of agriculture and of trade was watched and aided by the higher intelligence of the country: while a literary circle, of which Hume was the centre figure, made the period they adorned the Augustan age of Scotland.

A slight set-off, for a time, is not at all inconsistent with these immense advantages. The air and manners of its now untravelled gentry may have fallen off a little,—something of the sort is said to have been observed by Marshal Keith on his return to Scotland: But the breeding which he missed had been all exotic—as

foreign as the scholarship of Buchanan—and had taken as little root. The cultivation which now replaced it was striking deep ; being native to the soil—in kind, in training, and in growth. Those natural developments and growths, which are the greatest of all social revolutions, are seldom noticed until they are accomplished. The corn-fields and gardens of the south did not, for long, expect to be put in charge of Scotch bailiffs and Scotch gardeners : And English scholars were scarcely less surprised when they were sent to metaphysicians, historians, and political economists, born and bred in Scotland—to learn from them the laws which regulate thought, and politics, and the wealth of nations. Thomson and Smollett had done a little—the one by his imagination, the other by his humour—towards warming and enlivening the dulness of the reigns of the two first Georges : But even, after Hume and Robertson and Adam Smith had drawn upon themselves the eyes of Europe, and Gibbon had borne testimony to the splendour of their light, ancient prejudices were slowly overcome. Johnson had the courage to persist in the faith in which he had been brought up ; and died maintaining that Scotland had produced no man of genius except Buchanan. In due time came the Scotch Novels, and carried every thing before them : Yet the author of the *Man of Feeling* still hesitated to trouble the great British public about the author of *Douglas*, and about the men of letters with whom the Scottish dramatist had lived. In consequence, however, of being assured that the literature of his country was attracting some attention in the south, and that its details might be interesting to English readers, Mackenzie timidly ventured to publish his *Life of John Home*, in 1822. At so late a day, himself one of the patriarchs of our polite literature, he was able to tender himself to another generation, as a witness ‘who had known it almost from its first dawning.’

The Scotch, in the mean time, it must be owned, cannot be reasonably charged with overlooking the merits of their countrymen, alive or dead. Among the contemporaries and compatriots of David Hume, sundry names, once more or less distinguished, are obscurity or obscured ; but none through want of a biographer. There are lives of Hutcheson, Leechman, and Oswald ; lives of the two Homes, lives of Blair and Beattie, as well as of Reid, of Robertson, and of Adam Smith. The three last biographies were grateful commemorations, by Dugald Stewart, of the masters at whose feet he had almost sat. In all justice, their literary history should have been accompanied by that of Hume ; for Hume was some ten or twelve years senior to Robertson and Smith. As an author he was older still. Without saying that he was their teacher in history and political economy, he was something more than simply their predecessor. Hume, it is true, was a

year younger than Reid ; but we know, on Reid's own authority, that it was as a pupil in the metaphysical school of Hume, that he had first learned to dispute the principles which he was studying, and to try conclusions with their author. To the *Treatise on Human Nature* we owe the *Enquiry into the Human Mind*.

Two causes will perhaps explain why Dugald Stewart abstained from undertaking the life of Hume. Of these, one would be the difficulty of the subject. The times in which he drew up his biographies, were awkward times :—so much so, that he did not venture in them to speak his mind fully and freely, on the much simpler case of Adam Smith. The other cause, however, was of itself sufficient. Hume's nephew and namesake, afterwards Baron Hume, had possession of his uncle's papers. It would have been absurd to write the life without them. And Baron Hume (timorous and jealous) might have refused the use of them to a Philosopher and a Whig.

Along with his name, (which he had no doubt would bring him friends and credit, if his father would only let him wear it without disguise,) Hume had left his nephew an embarrassing bequest ; this was the 'Dialogues on Natural Religion.' As far back as 1753, he had been prevailed upon, though with some difficulty, by Sir Gilbert Elliot, to suppress them. 'Is it not hard and tyrannical in you, (he remonstrated) more hard and tyrannical than any act of the Stuarts, not to allow me to publish my Dialogues?' His testamentary injunction, directing their publication, was declined by Adam Smith : But it was too peremptory not to be obeyed by a kinsman, whom he had in some measure adopted. The publication produced at the time (as we learn from Beattie) a strong sensation : And, satisfied with obedience in this instance, the nephew appears to have resolved to commit himself personally no further. He was laudably careful, however, to preserve his uncle's manuscripts, and whatever correspondence he could recover. The entire collection he left, at his death, to the Royal Society of Edinburgh : and, the Council of the Society placed it in the hands of Mr Burton. These materials were indispensable to a Life of Hume. No former biographer had had access to them ; and it is highly improbable that any addition will ever now be made to them. They have been invaluable to Mr Burton ; and have enabled him to gratify a literary ambition which he had long cherished. By their means, he has presented us with a much more complete picture of Hume, than Dugald Stewart had it in his power to give us of Reid, Robertson, or Smith. From the industry, the good sense, and good feeling, which the present biography displays, the Council, we are persuaded, will not repent their choice.

The really important part of these Hume papers is the Cor-

respondence. It consists of upwards of five hundred letters. Those written by Hume are interwoven into the present narrative; those written to him, or a selection from them, are to be published in a separate volume. It is not universally true, that a man's letters give a good idea of his conversation. For instance, the few letters we have of Samuel Johnson, are as unlike his conversation as his more formal writings were, and are as much below it. But there are many persons whose letters are just their written conversation; and such, evidently, are Hume's. They answer completely to Adam Smith's account of that constant pleasantry—that genuine effusion of good nature and good humour, of which his friends were frequently the object, and which, they all agreed, contributed to endear his society to them fully as much as any of his great and amiable qualities. Hume's conversation, whether spoken or written, lay far beyond the range of Swift's national reflection on the matter-of-fact narrations which, he said, he had observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation—'who think, they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with a kind of discourse, which, were it not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable.' A Scotchman's letters must necessarily trust entirely for relief, to the first half of the peculiar graces here assigned to him. But none of these will be found in Hume—he has more Gallicisms than Scotticisms—and yet his letters are most agreeable. Among them, those which would have been read with the greatest interest are almost all missing. We mean his correspondence with Robertson. Should over-zealous friends have put it out of the way, in the foolish hope of destroying evidence of an intimacy the thought of which annoyed them, they plainly ran into a far greater peril—by destroying the best and most natural contradiction of unfounded rumours on the nature of their correspondence. Dr Hill, when he wrote the life of Blair, believed that Hume's correspondence with Blair had shared the same fate; fortunately this was not the case. It had been lodged by Blair himself in the nephew's hands: and fuller demonstration cannot be desired, that in order to live with Hume and to love him, it was not necessary to agree with him in opinion. There exists, we believe, among the Hume papers, the letter, with which Blair accompanied the delivery over to Baron Hume of the letters in his possession. Unless we have been greatly misinformed, it bears testimony to the character of Hume, in language almost as glowing as the celebrated letter of Adam Smith to Strahan. Mr Burton will surely let us see this letter in his promised volume. Bishop Horne put in a protest, on behalf of the people calling themselves

Christians, against the testimony of Adam Smith. We should like to see how much of it can apply to the testimony of Blair.

David Hume was the youngest son of a small Border Laird, (Home or Hume,) of Ninewells, in Berwickshire. They were (of course) connected, though they had to go back for their branching off to the reigns of Henry Vth or VIth., with the Earls of Home. He was an infant at the death of his father; but he appears to have set up betimes for the character under which he afterwards described himself—that of a ‘friend to doubts, disputes, and novelties:’ Since his patronymic had no sooner come into his hands, than he chose to, what he called, restore its ancient spelling. His friends, Henry Home, and his cousin John, both stood out: he failed to bring over to his side even his own elder brother. Still he persevered to the last: expressed as much astonishment as the twelfth man on a jury with the obstinacy of his fellows, and was predetermined, at the worst, to found his family anew. A lucky house—whose family differences were to wear no graver form than a controversy about their name! It was a controversy, however, as much after Hume’s heart as that of the more famous Nominalists. His playful nature made the most of it; and kept turning the coat of the ancient jest long after it was threadbare, through an endless variety of shapes and colours, to his dying day.

More serious questions, and which could less afford to wait, wanted settling even sooner. The questions were nothing less than, what was to be his course of education; and what his profession and means of living. A father is sometimes sadly missed, as adviser and controller, in the case even of a studious and reflective son. It was so here. After his removal, the family consisted of a mother, a sister, and an elder brother. The brother is said to have been a great rural economist; and one of the earliest Scotch improvers. It is mentioned as one of his peculiarities, (few landlords, we fear, will now think it looks like being a great improver,) that he was unwilling to raise his rents. The singular merit of their mother has been gratefully recorded by her historian son: Young and handsome, she devoted herself entirely to rearing and educating her children. Hume loved to think that, if she had but lived, he might never have had any other home than Ninewells; and we are told of the agony of tears (among the few tears the philosopher ever shed,) in which one of his friends surprised him, when, on his return from Italy, he met in London the news of that mother’s death! Of the sister little more is said, than that they joined together their humble means on removing from Ninewells to Edinburgh; that she had L.30 a-year; and that she brought to the husbanding of their common stock a frugality and a contentment equal to his own.

There is nobody in this small household likely to have possessed much influence over the studies of an aspiring boy. The early course of education, which, he says, he passed through with success, before he took to literature on its own account, must have been wonderfully immature, as far as regards external training, according to present notions. All that can be ascertained of it, is furnished by the simple entry of the name of 'David Home,' in the matriculation book of the University of Edinburgh, February 1723, in the Greek class. He was then not quite twelve years old. Nothing more is known of his intellectual discipline or habits, either at this period, or for the next ten years, beyond what he has introduced into the strange hypochondriacal account of himself, on which, in the year 1734, he appears to have consulted Dr Cheyne. This, however, abundantly shows that things were much in his own hands; and that he had soon begun, in all senses of the word, to be his own master. 'Our college education in Scotland, extending little further than the languages, ends commonly when we are about fourteen or fifteen years of age. I was after that left to my own choice in my reading, and found it incline me almost equally to books of reasoning and philosophy, and to poetry, and the polite authors. Every one who is acquainted with the philosophers or critics, knows that there is nothing yet established in either of these two sciences, and that they contain little more than endless disputes, even in the most fundamental articles. Upon examination of these, I found a certain boldness of temper growing in me, which was not inclined to submit to any authority in these subjects, but led me to seek out some new medium; by which truth might be established. After much study and reflection on this, at last, when I was about eighteen years of age, there seemed to be opened up to me a new scene of thought, which transported me beyond measure, and made me, with an ardour natural to young men, throw up every other pleasure or business, to apply entirely to it. The law, which was the business I designed to follow, appeared nauseous to me, and I could think of no other way of pushing my fortune in the world, but that of a scholar and philosopher. I was infinitely happy in this course of life for some months; till at last, all my ardour seemed in a moment to be extinguished.'

He imagined this to be laziness, and read the harder. Another particular contributed to disturb him. He undertook the improvement of his temper and will, along with that of his reason and understanding. His spirits sank lower and lower. He sought for refuge in peevish reflections on the vanity of the world, and of all human glory—sentiments which he found could never be sincere, except in those who were already in possession of the

honours they despised. He was told that he had the disease of the learned! Poor relief for an ambitious scholar—that, while he had been collecting the rude materials of many volumes, he had incapacitated himself from putting them into words and order! ‘I lost,’ he says, ‘all hope of delivering my opinions with such elegance as would draw to me the attention of the world; and I would rather live and die in obscurity, than produce them maimed and imperfect.’ Such were his meditations and proceedings up to twenty-three.

Can there be a more perfect picture of a visionary student left to his own mismanagement? His family, on both sides, had of late been connected with the law. It may probably be true, that he was as little fitted for the contentions of the bar, as for moss-trooping with his forefathers on a border foray: But for a lad of seventeen, who had his bread to get by his wits, to have thrown away his law books in disgust, because he had not found the first few pages of Voet and Vinnius pleasant reading, was to take a childish and perverse advantage of his unlucky independence. It was doing all that was in his power to keep up the vulgar contradiction between genius and common sense—to ruin himself, and mortify his friends.

But the penalty of self-pleasing was not long delayed. Solitude, over-excitement, and over-reading brought on a violent reaction. After struggling in vain against it for three or four years, change of scene became absolutely necessary. The form in which the experiment was tried, appeared to combine the advantage of employment with the chance of a provision. He tore himself from his books and Ninewells; and, now twenty-three years old, found himself, to his own no small surprise, clerk or shopman to a considerable Bristol trader! He arrived there a confirmed valetudenarian, out of health and out of spirits. If his employer could have looked into his mind, he would have seen in it as little hope of making a man of business of him, as could possibly be foreshadowed in his appearance—since we know from himself that he went to Bristol, resolved ‘not to quit his pretensions to learning, but with his last breath—willing, however, to lay them aside for some time, in order more effectually to resume them.’ But this is not the way in which merchants are made, any more than lawyers. If the fastidious student did ever betake himself to the literature of the ledger, he soon abjured it, as even more intolerable than the literature of the law. He cultivated it at most only a few months—just long enough for a tradition, that some happy customer lived to remember having been served by the great historian, from behind a Bristol counter, with a pair of gloves! Some of the readers of his History may probably recollect his description of

the entry of Nayler the Quaker into Bristol, as Jesus Christ; and, how the poor enthusiast entered upon horseback, instead of on an ass, 'probably from the difficulty of finding an ass in that city!' It is difficult to suppose that this incongruous impertinence can have honestly found its way into a grave historical composition: But, after reading his letters, we can enter into his malicious pleasure in avenging, in a parenthesis, the indignities of his youth. It is quite in character with the satisfaction, which he avowedly felt, in making every revision of his History of England a fresh occasion for punishing 'the villainous Whigs,' for the slight which they had put upon his History of the Stuarts.

The singular letter, from which we have quoted a few paragraphs, is all that we know of the youth of Hume. It was written in the despondency of a long illness, and shows his mind in its weakness more than in its strength. Still, though morbid, it is characteristic. We cannot help, as we pass on, recalling another and a very different letter, which represents, also, the feelings of its writer at exactly the same age. The original of this other letter is in Trinity College, Cambridge. It is Milton's answer to an admonition of a friend who had been warning him that the hours of the night were passing on; (for such, said the poet, he might call his life, as yet obscure and unserviceable to mankind;) and that he was giving up himself 'to dream away his years in the arms of studious retirement, like Endymion with the moon, as the tale of Latmos goes.' In phraseology which Hume undoubtedly would have regarded well fitted to the sentiments, Milton proceeds to a solemn disclaimer of the endless delight of speculation, 'weighed against that great commandment in the gospel, set out by the terrible seizing of him that hid the talent.' He was, however, something suspicious of himself, and had taken notice of a certain belatedness in his manhood; he made bold, therefore, to sanctify the letter 'with some of his nightward thoughts,' and he sent along with it to his friend the reverential dedication of his future life, offered up in those immortal verses:—

“How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!”

Notwithstanding the protection of the 'great Taskmaster's eye,' so violent were Milton's prejudices, that had he been the historian of the Stuarts, he would have sinned against truth as much, perhaps, as Hume—only not as wilfully. But, judging of their respective characters, we see nothing in their after lives, to belie the spirit which spoke thus early in these two letters.

To our ear, the voice we catch in Milton's musings is of a far higher mood ; though Johnson would certainly be equally contemptuous at the thought of making a hero out of either.

But to proceed with our narrative. Before the year was out, Hume had broken away from the servile oar ; crossed the channel, and hid himself in France. He took 'the rude materials' of his new philosophy along with him ; and remained there for three years, principally at La Flèche ; having little enough to live upon, except his metaphysics and his dreams of fame. He had now deliberately chosen literature as his profession ; and was resolved not to show himself again among his old acquaintance, until he should have done something towards justifying his choice. On his return to London in 1737, with the *Treatise on Human Nature*, ready for the press, he told Henry Home that he had a great inclination to go down to Scotland to see his friends, and have their advice concerning his philosophical discoveries ; 'but I cannot overcome a certain shamefacedness I have, to appear among you, at my years, without having yet a settlement, or so much as attempted any. How happens it, that we philosophers cannot as heartily despise the world, as the world despises us ?' To talk of philosophy on this occasion, is to take its name in vain. Hume was not long in learning, that the world was in the right ; and that he should never have left an honest home, at his tender years, with scarcely a penny in his pocket, to attack windmills—or the tower of Babel. From the language in which he afterwards dissuaded Gilbert Stewart against 'going out of the common track,' he might be suspected of having passed over to the opposite extreme.

A terrible disappointment was now at hand. To understand from what a visionary height he had to fall, we must think how long he had been living alone among his own transported thoughts, and how high he had been accustoming his hopes to soar. Philosophy was a subject, which, at sixteen, he was already much thinking upon, and upon which he tells his boyish correspondent, that he could talk to him all day long. From his letter to Dr Cheyne, when yet only eighteen, views of his own had got entire possession of him ; and, by the time he was three-and-twenty, he had made considerable progress in developing them. At this early age he resolved to make human nature his principal study, and the source from which he was to derive every truth, in criticism as well as morality. 'I believe,' he says, 'it is a certain fact, that most of the philosophers who have gone before us, have been overthrown by the greatness of their genius ; and that little more is required to make a man succeed in this study, than to throw off all prejudices, either for

‘his own opinions or for those of others. At least, this is all I have to depend on for the truth of my reasonings, which I have multiplied to such a degree, that within these three years I find I have scribbled many a quire of paper, in which there is nothing contained but my own inventions.’

His residence at La Flèche must have encouraged him in his enterprise, by the glory of Des Cartes’ name, and, perhaps, by reminding him of the resemblance in their age and projects. The French philosopher, however, postponed to future years the application of his methods. Unfortunately, Hume’s impatience, presumption, or necessities, hurried him to the press. A capital mistake; which made the recovery from former mistakes still more difficult; and which, the longer he lived, he only the more regretted. Alas! for all whose winged intellect, buoyant and proudly feathered, lifts them from the nest, and carries them abroad, before nature, even the rest of their own nature, is ready for the flight!

Of the many forms which adventure, project, and speculation take, none is more above advice and fears, than that of the youthful author. Hume came from his abstractions to the realities of life—and to John Noone of Cheapside, bookseller—as one from Fairyland or Cloudland. He informs his friend Michael Ramsay, on his arrival, ‘that he would not aim at any thing, until he could judge of his success in his grand undertaking, and see upon what footing he was to stand in the world.’ As the hour of publication approached, his tranquillity became disturbed ‘by the nearness and greatness’ of the event. The *Treatise on Human Nature*, was born into the world in February 1739. The world went on as before notwithstanding. No comet welcomed it from the sky; no howl even from the Warburtonian kennel. He sent a copy to Bishop Butler: But it was not a child which any Bishop (even a Butler or a Berkeley) could safely acknowledge. The awful and unnatural stillness of London seems to have alarmed him; and he thought it best to await the result at a distance. During the fortnight that contrary winds kept the Berwick ships from sailing, he had time to summon to his defence the comforting reflection, that, if the success of his philosophical discoveries should be long doubtful, the very greatness of them might be the cause! ‘My principles (he wrote to Henry Home, by way of preparing him) are so remote from all the vulgar sentiments on the subject, that, were they to take place, they would produce an almost total alteration in philosophy; and you know revolutions of this kind are not easily brought about.’ Six months later brought him word, that the heir of all these hopes had been all along still-born:

had been never heard even to cry! He appears to have submitted to the intelligence much more graciously than he afterwards put up with lighter mortifications. He humbly confessed, that his fondness, for what he imagined to be new discoveries, had made him overlook all common rules of prudence: And so he returned to nestle under his mother's wing at Ninewells; and set about turning his mind to other projects, in the assurance that there is a harbour of refuge with posterity, for all unsuccessful truths.

Youth was now over, and the severe student had passed into the ranks of unsuccessful authors: Not, however, to be so put down, and quietly disappear in that interminable crowd. The philosophical reformer continued to believe in his revolutionary doctrines. He was not likely therefore to surrender his confidence in his own capacity, to the ignorance or indifference of any existing public. The second five-and twenty years, upon which we are about to enter, were almost entirely years of authorship. Reducing his pretensions only a little lower than his original ambition, he bestowed the first half of the remainder of his literary life upon completing and recasting his Treatise; and upon some most original investigations of many of the finest questions relating to society and politics,—the last half of it upon English history.

He returned to Ninewells, with his disappointment, in 1739. He was now twenty-seven years old; and was soon busy over other literary projects, with the view both of diversifying his studies and trying anew the public taste. The first fruits of this experiment was a small volume of miscellaneous essays, 'moral and political,' which was published in Edinburgh in 1741. They were so favourably received, that a second volume, and a second edition of the first volume, came out the following year. In 1748, there was a third edition of the whole. Hume heard, that Bishop Butler went about everywhere, *recommending* the first volume, as soon as it came out. This must have been an occasion, discreetly taken by the author of the 'Sermons on Human Nature,' for encouraging indirectly the author of the 'Treatise.' For he must have been a prophet rather than a critic, who could have then foreseen what that volume was destined to become. Eight of these early Essays were afterwards weeded out; of which one, upon love and marriage, was meant to be gallant and Addisonian: But unless his conversation had been in a very different tone, he never could have boasted that he had been always fond of the society of modest women, and always favourably received. By successive revisings and enlargings, these two volumes grew into the first part of that delightful book, 'Essays, Moral, Literary, and Political,' the

only one of his works so instantaneously triumphant, as to answer his own exorbitant idea of success. They are indeed perfect specimens of this species of composition. Adam Smith's first lectures had been delivered in 1748; but the 'Wealth of Nations' was not published till 1776—only just in time for Hume to read and admire it, in his last illness.* No previously existing work can have contributed so much towards the 'Wealth of Nations' as the 'Political Discourses.' And Adam Smith must have taken a most austere view of the moral duty of a dedication, when he did not allow either this consideration, or personal affection, to make up for some differences of opinion. But he considered the system of the French economists to be the nearest approximation to the truth yet published; and he told Dugald Stewart that if Quesnay had been alive, he should have dedicated the 'Wealth of Nations' to him. Hume certainly would have looked for another patron: Since, in a letter to the Abbé Morellet (1769,) he calls on him to thunder on the Economists—'Crush them, and pound them, and reduce them to dust and ashes. They are the set of men the most chimerical and most arrogant that now exist—since the annihilation of the Sorbonne.'

The 'Discourses' were translated immediately into French: And his translator writes him word that they were read like a romance; and that nothing which had been published, since the *Esprit des Loix*, had produced so great a sensation. To this period, also, must be referred the composition of the 'Dialogue on Natural Religion.' It was a posthumous publication; but the manuscript had been submitted to Sir Gilbert Elliot in 1751. Writings of this kind are now so little read, that it is scarcely worth while saying, that, in point of ability, it is at least equal to any thing Hume ever wrote; and superior, perhaps, in point of composition. Hume was an author to the backbone. The few pages, which he calls '*my own life*,' are little

* It is interesting to read in this deathbed acknowledgment the kindly summons addressed to its author, to repair to his fireside—'where,' he says, 'he would dispute with him some of his principles.' It is singular, too, that one of the heads which he proposes to discuss, should not have induced Smith to make a little alteration in the language in which he has spoken of the component parts of price, and of the monopoly of landlords:—'I cannot think,' says Hume, in words which after-discussions have made remarkable, 'that the rent of farms makes any part of the price of produce; but that the price is determined altogether by the supply and the demand.' The merit of the French Economists must have been another of the points of difference reserved for this fireside conference, which unfortunately never took place.

else than a list of his writings, and an account of his own impression of the manner in which the public had received them. To that statement, and to Mr Burton, we must refer our readers; observing only that the speculations, on which for ten or twelve years he was chiefly occupied, have formed an æra in more than one science.

Mean time, while he was working out his various views, and striving to put them in the most acceptable lights, he was in want of all the comforts with which literature ought to be supplied. His boyish dream of literary fame was in a fair way of coming true. The airy column was slowly rising. But his incredulity about it was as much a disease as his other incredulities. At the same time his circumstances were in a desperate condition. The most painful frugality could not save him from the indignities of present dependence; nor from the phantom crowd of melancholy apprehensions, incident to an uncertain future. In the order of nature, grown-up members of a family are thrust from the parent stock, by a pressure as uniform and necessary as that which forces the acorn from the tree. A man must have some other home than the house even of an elder brother; unless he can submit to live there, as gamekeeper or tutor. Accordingly, the plunges which, at this time, Hume kept making to reach at something to which he could hold fast, were those almost of a drowning man. Often, when he saw Lord Kaimes, Lord Hailes, and Lord Monboddo, reconciling literature and law, and rising to affluence and honour, he must have bitterly repented having trusted himself, out and out, to literature alone—the reed, which is almost sure to break when it alone is leant on. Often, too, when he was longing for a Professorship at Edinburgh or Glasgow, or offering himself as travelling governor, to apparently any laird who would trust a son with him, must he have felt conscious that, in his despair, he was asking for situations which he ought to have recollected that he had already renounced. Hutcheson had warned him from the first of the imprudence of sundry passages in the ‘Treatise.’ Most of them he agreed to alter, though with some reluctance—saying, that he did not think, as the world was now modelled, that a man’s character depended on his philosophical speculations, ‘*except* he were in orders, or immediately concerned in the ‘instruction of youth.’ Experience ultimately convinced him, that the world was not exactly modelled as he supposed. That conviction, however, was the work of time; and, in the interval, he only damaged his friends as well as himself by calling upon them to come to his aid in a hopeless struggle against his own exception. If Smith’s wishes had been gratified by having him

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for a colleague, would he also have looked back upon the days when he had been a Professor at Glasgow, as having been by far the most useful, and, therefore, the happiest period of his life?

In the critical year of 1745, the Ethical Chair at Edinburgh became vacant. Hume's friends threw themselves into an obnoxious conflict in his behalf. The charges of scepticism and heterodoxy, together with other hard names, were flying about in all quarters, (even Hutcheson declining to support him,) when their candidate privily disappeared—and the next thing heard of him was, that he had engaged himself as company-keeper to Lord Annandale, a literary lunatic, then residing in the neighbourhood of St Albans! Under a commission of lunacy, subsequently issued, Lord Annandale was found to have been a lunatic during the whole time that Hume was with him. Hume, nevertheless, drank out this twelvemonth of ignominy and misery, to the very dregs. The same pressure which had driven him to such an office, made him cling to it through every kind of contumely. He grew gloomy and unsocial, and mourned over his way of life 'as more melancholy than any submitted 'to by any human creature who ever had any hopes or pretensions to any thing better:' Yet he still hung on; till my lord, in the most offensive language, ordered him to be gone. What a spectacle! We should not have been more astonished, had we tracked him out, this unlucky year, in the company of his Highland countrymen on their march to Derby! When Burke, twenty years afterwards, threw back the terms, which single-speech Hamilton had presumed to offer him, and called them terms, which had never before been offered to a man born out of Africa, he little knew what Hume had undergone.

So much for his first civilian engagement! It makes us wonder less, that two months after, he should have been thinking of the army. Yet again; into what straits must he have been run—at the age of thirty-five, to be asked, whether he would enter into the service? and to have no answer to return, but that, at his years, he could not decently accept of a lower commission than a company. There was no time to lose, however, on either side; for his new patron, General Sinclair, was on the point of setting off on an expedition. It was intended against Canada; but ended in a ridiculous descent on Brittany. Upon this, the pair of colours, which had been talked about, were suddenly changed into the office, first of Secretary, and afterwards of Judge Advocate. Mr Burton intimates, that a greater proportion of his countrymen than of any other people, consider themselves qualified for the public service—in other words, for place,—and look to it, accordingly, as their natural

provision. This comes, it may be charitably presumed, from their better general education. Hume has recorded his aversion to Voet and Vinnius; that is, to the first elements of jurisprudence; and it is plain that he never opened a law book. No matter; he was, we dare say, as good a Judge Advocate as their caricature of an expedition needed. But it would have been as well, if he had spared himself a long heart-burning, at not having got half-pay for life, by this six months' service. After a break of a few months, he was off again with General Sinclair, as his Secretary, on a military mission to the courts of Austria and Piedmont. This was the time when Lord Charlemont saw him at Turin—as droll a figure as ever represented us at a foreign court.

Hume was away, on these two occasions, between two and three years. It must have been a serious interruption to his studies; but it was his only one; and its disadvantages were amply compensated to him—in some degree, perhaps, in the way which the future historian had expected—by some little insight into courts and camps; but much more, by the friends and fortune it had enabled him to make. His friends smiled when, on his return, he talked of his fortune. 'I was now master of near a thousand pounds!' The rich may smile. But in all Hume's knowledge, there was nothing which he knew better, and which is more worth knowing, than what money is really worth—what it can do, and what it cannot; how much may be secured by a very little, and how very little there remains to be afterwards accomplished, by thousands upon thousands more! After all Hume had gone through, a thousand pounds to him *was* independence: And in hands, which can wisely close and wisely open, (which we are assured was the case with his—though a master in political economy,) they answered most of the purposes of larger means. It was an invaluable thousand pounds also for the public: Since the historical pursuits, which Hume had from the first postponed for his riper years, had been lately waiting only for leisure and opportunity; and these, in their turn, had been only waiting for a little money which he could call his own.

His new means were soon put in requisition. Upon his return from abroad, he had had the misfortune to find his mother dead. He staid, however, with his brother nearly a couple of years; and might probably have staid on, only that his brother married. It was time to look out for new quarters. These were naturally Edinburgh, which henceforward became his home. The apparition of a new mistress at Ninewells can have only a little quickened his discovery, that town was the true scene for a man of letters. He could hardly have finished the first chapter of his History, without wanting more books than are to be met with in

a country-house or a provincial town. He must have found himself soon as ill-off in Berwickshire as Gibbon would have been twenty years ago in the United States; where Mr Justice Story says, in a literary discourse of so late a date, that there did not exist perhaps a single library which would have enabled the historian of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' to have verified his authorities.

Hume had been settled only a few months in Edinburgh, when the Faculty of Advocates (after a hot opposition on the old objections) appointed him their librarian. The appointment was a considerable addition to his small income. But, soon afterwards, on being, as he conceived, insulted by the curators, he magnanimously gave up the salary to Blacklock, the blind poet; in order that his motive for retaining the situation might not be misunderstood. The situation placed 30,000 volumes at his will and pleasure; ample materials these for the History of the House of Stuart—on which, accordingly, he immediately began. His own account, at the time, to his friend Ramsay, of these changes, and his sense of security in his humble competency, are very innocent—and, we may say, touching also: 'I might pretend, perhaps, as well as others, to complain of fortune; but I do not; and I should condemn myself as unreasonable if I did. Whilst interest remains as at present, I have L.50 a-year, a hundred pounds' worth of books, great store of linen and fine clothes, and near L.100 in my pocket; along with order, frugality, a strong spirit of independency, good health, a contented humour, and an unabating love of study. In these circumstances, I must esteem myself one of the happy and fortunate; and, so far from being willing to draw my ticket over again in the lottery of life, there are very few prizes with which I would make an exchange. After some deliberation, I am resolved to settle in Edinburgh. As my sister can join L.30 a-year to my stock, and brings an equal love of order and frugality, we doubt not to make our revenues answer.' [1751.]

For a time the expectations of his sober nature were realized. Two years pass, and his position is still new to him. A frolicsome letter to Dr Clephane presents us with as happy an interior (allowing for a touch of levity,) as Cowper could have drawn and peopled. There is the same infantine humour in exaggerating his felicity, and in dwelling with mock importance on its details:—'I shall exult and triumph to you a little, that I have now at last—being turned of forty—to my own honour, to that of learning, and to that of the present age,—arrived at the dignity of being a householder! About seven months ago I got a house of my own, and completed a regular family: consisting

'of a head, viz. myself, and two inferior members, a maid, and a
 'cat. My sister has since joined me, and keeps me company.
 'With frugality I can reach, I find, cleanliness, warmth, light,
 'plenty, and contentment. What would you have more? Inde-
 'pendence?—I have it in a supreme degree. Honour?—that is
 'not altogether wanting. Grace?—that will come in time. A
 'wife?—that is none of the indispensable requisites of life.
 'Books?—that is one of them, and I have more than I can use.
 'In short, I cannot find any blessing of consequence which I am
 'not possessed of, in a greater or less degree; and, without any
 'great effort of philosophy, I may be easy and satisfied.' [1753.]
 In due time, however, he got accustomed to all these comforts;
 and was ready for his last transition—from competency to super-
 fluity, and to the hospitalities of a retired and wealthy *diplomate*.
 His picture of himself and of his dinners, and his political ill hu-
 mour, is not unlike Swift. It will be sixteen years before his
 Edinburgh guests are to be partakers of the new learning which
 he brought back with him from Paris. But that picture may be
 properly introduced here; as it is a kind of *pendant* to the former
 one; and represents what some people may look forward to as the
euthanasia of a successful author:—'I live still, and must for a
 'twelvemonth, in my old house in St James's Court, which is very
 'cheerful, and even elegant, but too small to display my great
 'talent for cookery—the science to which I intend to addict the
 'remaining years of my life! I have just now lying on the
 'table before me a receipt for making *soupe à la reine*, copied
 'with my own hand. For beef and cabbage, (a charming dish,)
 'and old mutton, and old claret, nobody excels me. I make
 'also sheep's-head broth, in a manner that Mr Keith speaks of
 'it for eight days after; and the Duc de Nivernois would bind
 'himself apprentice to my lass to learn it! I have already sent
 'a challenge to David Moncrief: you will see that in a twelve-
 'month he will take to the writing of history (the field I have
 'deserted), for, as to giving of dinners, he can now have no
 'further pretensions. I should have made a very bad use of my
 'abode in Paris if I could not get the better of a mere provincial
 'like him. All my friends encourage me in this ambition, as
 'thinking it will redound very much to my honour. I am de-
 'lighted to see the daily and hourly progress of madness, and
 'folly, and wickedness, in England. The consummation of
 'these qualities are the true ingredients for making a fine narra-
 'tive in history, especially if followed by some signal and ruin-
 'ous convulsion, as I hope will soon be the case with that per-
 'nicious people! He must be a very bad cook indeed who
 'cannot make a palatable dish from the whole. You see, in

‘my reflections and allusions, I mix my old and new professions together.’ [1769.]

Hume had early commenced author: he ended proportionably early. In 1752, another ten years of work lay spread before him; after which he was to have a holiday for life. The space between our fortieth and fiftieth year is perhaps (for the rational part of our nature) the very pick of our threescore years and ten: and it was this decade which Hume appropriated to History. The undertaking was one for which, from his natural turn of mind and his previous studies, he was, in many most important requisites, eminently qualified. We cannot wish, therefore, that he should have devoted his last literary labours to any other service. Still less, if he was to choose history, can we fall in with Mr Burton’s wish, that he should have chosen some other history, (ancient history, for instance,) instead of the history of England. What would have been the use of anticipating Mitford in a Tory history of Greece? In one respect, he certainly would not have interfered with either Mitford or his successors: for, ‘concise, after the manner of the ancients,’ on suggesting the subject to Robertson, he thought it ought to be brought down to Philip of Macedon in a single volume quarto. Our readers will see in time, that we are fully sensible to the objections against leaving the History of England exclusively in the hands of Hume. He frequently provokes us quite as much as Mr Burton or Mr Brodie can desire. His craving after theories, or pictures which were to produce effect,—his political prejudices,—his want of sympathy with the beneficial influences of Christianity on modern Europe,—and his unfortunate ignorance of mediæval antiquity and English jurisprudence, amount at times, and on certain questions, almost to a disqualification. They make it absolutely necessary, at all events, that Hume’s history should not be our only history; or, at least, that it should be accompanied by some copious and authoritative commentary, as a check. We are afraid too, that Hume had at no time that austere reverence for truth, which is the only safety for an historian: while the accidental causes by which his worst tendencies were made worse than they might otherwise have been, lie on the surface of the correspondence published in the present volumes.

But before we begin upon any ground of quarrel, it is much more agreeable, first to look at him sitting down to his great work; and to see, that among all the pleasures which greeted him on taking up his abode at Edinburgh, far from the least were the sanguine spirits with which he entered on his historical career. Smith had been giving him good advice, (as he afterwards acknowledged.) The following letter is his answer. It is the earliest letter to Smith which has been preserved:—‘I confess I was

'once of the same opinion with you, and thought that the best period to begin an English history was about Henry the Seventh; but you will please to observe, that the change which then happened in public affairs was very insensible; and did not display its influence till many years afterwards. 'Twas under James that the House of Commons began first to raise their (its?) head, and then the quarrel betwixt Privilege and Prerogative commenced. The government, no longer oppressed by the enormous authority of the crown, displayed its genius; and the factions which then arose, having an influence on our present affairs, form the most curious, interesting, and instructive part of our history. The preceding events, or causes, may easily be shown, in a reflection or review; which may be artfully inserted in the body of the work; and the whole, by that means, be rendered more compact and uniform. I confess that the subject appears to me very fine; and I enter upon it with great ardour and pleasure. You need not doubt of my perseverance.' [1752.]

What a pity that this complacency could not last! But the spirit of authorship, by which he was possessed, was a perturbed spirit; feeding more on literary fame than on the simple love of letters. The opposition, which the first volume of the Stuarts met with, seems to have taken away from him almost all heart and pleasure in the rest; except the bitter pleasure of confounding his opponents by making falsehood look like truth, and the worse appear the better reason. He thought the second volume of the Stuarts much inferior to the first; at least, he says so: and he accounted for it 'by the infinite disgust and reluctance' with which, after a long interval, he had returned to it. The effect of this, he was sensible, appeared in many passages. On the failure of the Treatise, he had been willing to take part of the blame upon himself. Not so now. The whole blame of the evil reception of his History, rested with the public. Religious prejudices were so natural to all mankind, as to be entitled to some respect: But for political prejudices he had no indulgence. Whatever knowledge he pretended to in history and human affairs, he had not had so bad an opinion of man as to expect that their want of candour and humanity would have exposed him to the treatment he had received! (1757.) It is true, he did not lose a jot of confidence in his powers: but the fire was extinguished in him, he thought; and with it the security, and almost the wish to please.

By the time he got to the reigns of the Tudors, his spirits had in some measure returned to him; and were kept up by the passion of an advocate pleading a cause, on which he had staked his character. On going back to the early part

of English history, we observe in the Correspondence only one notice of it, while he is engaged upon it. It is in a couple of lines; and merely speaks of the infinite labour and study which it costs him; coldly adding, that he does not grudge it, having nothing better nor more agreeable to employ him. So low had his ambition dropped—employment for employment's sake!—perhaps, he should have rather said, (since hard students have always employment at command,) for the sake of the two thousand eight hundred pounds, which he received from Miller, for the three series which complete his History. If we recollect what were his means and what his prospects, there was no other way by which he could expect the narrow basis of his pecuniary independence to be so substantially enlarged. But the importance of this object would scarcely prevent him from wearying over his work: and, to this weariness, two causes must materially have contributed. He could not help being conscious that he had neither the knowledge nor the interest which an historian of the Anglo-Saxons and Plantagenets should possess; and next, he had been paid for the work before he wrote it. We are afraid, therefore, that in making out a list of Hume's pleasures, we must not put that of the actual composition of his History into the account. To the latter circumstance Robertson familiarly attributed his superficial treatment of that period—a fact, of which the contemporaries of Whitaker were well aware, though they were without the lights which have been since so much more fully thrown on Anglo-Saxon history. Hume ran his hand over several kinds of composition; we have endeavoured to make out in which of them he had the greatest pleasure. Leaving aside the gratification afforded to his vanity by success, there is reason for believing that metaphysical speculations were more truly congenial to his nature, and therefore contributed more to his intellectual happiness, than historical reasoning or research.

Hume, when a young man, had been accustomed to come to Edinburgh as a visitor, for the winter season. He was now come there in his manhood; and (a very different matter) to settle in it as his home. He brought his History along with him, instead of either wife or mistress; and though, as we have seen, its attractions by degrees fell off, it continued to require as much attention from him, as during his first passion for it. It saved him, therefore, necessarily, from one of the humiliating perils of single life—dependence on society. Yet, while his studious habits made him independent of society, his sociable nature left him open to all its charms. Amusing and amused in every variety of company, he brought sunshine wherever he appeared; and

seems to have been as universally welcome as a fine day. He had, besides, a still more enviable talent, that of making Friends : such friends, that is, as are made more by sweetness of temper than by depth of feeling. It was a talent, too, which he never let lie idle long—except in England. It is a singular exception. But, among his many friends, there never turns up by chance a single Englishman ! His connexion with Lord Hertford might be complimented with the name ; but it is a compliment by which nobody standing in their relation, ever is deceived. Of the friends who had grown up with him, the most distinguished were Mure of Caldwell, Oswald of Dunikier, and Henry Home, afterwards Lord Kaimes. Of these, Oswald was an eminent Glasgow merchant. He appears, as a practical man of business and theoretical political economist, to have borne nearly the same relation to Hume and Smith, as Gournay bore to Quesnay and Turgot. The friendships of Sir Gilbert Elliot and Adam Smith were a later acquisition. A little before Hume's coming to reside at Edinburgh, Adam Smith had been translated from an Edinburgh Lectureship, to a Professorship at Glasgow. Up to that time, they can have seldom met. Yet, though Smith was then only twenty-eight years old, and ten years younger than Hume, the elder philosopher took him into consultation, with full as much respect for his opinion as he ever had showed for Hutcheson, fifteen years before.

On the inglorious expedition to the coast of France in 1746, Hume managed to pick up two friends of a very different cast ; but they assimilated so well, that they stood by him for life : one was Colonel Edmonstone, the other Dr Clephane. It was natural that the necessities of a campaign should bring together the two civilians—the Doctor and Judge-Advocate—the Doctor knowing, it may be hoped, a little more of medicine than the Judge-Advocate of law. The friends we have named were all laymen. But, on taking up his abode at Edinburgh, Hume was introduced into a new circle. Afterwards, in the general unpopularity of his first volumes of the *Stuarts*, *Herring*, *Primate of England*, and *Stone*, *Primate of Ireland*, separately sent him messages not to be discouraged. He notices with a smile, that these ' seem two odd exceptions.' It must have at the time seemed still more curious to him, that all in this new circle—all at least of any note—were clergymen ; and, in the language of Church politics, were leaders of the Moderates in the General Assembly.

In the proud, yet simple Memoir, which Hume has called his funeral oration on himself, he boasts that his friends never had occasion to vindicate any single circumstance of his character and

conduct. Of the truth of this, there cannot possibly be stronger evidence than these last won friendships. To ordinary understandings, to be living in intimacy with David Hume will certainly appear, at least, as unclerical a proceeding as either writing a play, or going to see one acted. Yet, for the first of these minor offences, his cousin, the author of *Douglas*, was at this very time driven out of the Church; and, for the second, Dr Carlyle and others, sharply censured. Could any thing to his disadvantage have been fastened upon Hume, it would have been impossible for Jardine, Blair, and Robertson, to have met his adversaries at the gate: indeed, with no other objection against him, but his writings, the course they took was still a bold one: bolder, we suspect, than would be followed now. For, Hume's motions were all along watched closely by jealous eyes. He had not been three years librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, when he was deprived of the power of ordering in books. A resolution to that effect was brought forward by Lord Monboddo and Lord Hailes. They charged him with the scandal of having introduced into their library three indecent French novels, unworthy of a learned body. It is much more singular that the throwing of the first stone should have been left to the lawyers, than that, on its having hit its object, some among the clergy looked about them for a second missile. The form which the second assault assumed was particularly agreeable to the assailants; because its success must have compromised Blair and Robertson, as much almost as Hume. A sentence of excommunication upon the one, would have thrown its *penumbra* over the others. And this is the least which can have been contemplated by Dr Anderson, when he moved in the General Assembly the succeeding year, that a person styling himself David Hume, Esq., who had arrived at such a degree of boldness, as publicly to avow himself author of books subversive of Christianity, Natural Religion, and Morality, should be called before them. Fortunately, all, but a small minority, thought it more discreet to stop on the threshold than proceed. Things, therefore, went no further than insult and annoyance. Hume did well to despise these hornets: but he should have infused more justice and moderation into his scorn. We hope we are not to judge of his own feelings towards his opponents by his unmeasured language, when (years afterwards and far away) the first thought which comes to him on the death of Jardine, is the image of 'the miscreants of the opposite party' rejoicing over it. Among these miscreants was Ebenezer Erskine, whose funeral sermon upon Robertson is so honourable to both. That sermon, by the way, is indisputable evidence in favour of the Christian character of Robertson, from

a contemporary and a rival; and is wholly inconsistent with modern gossip about his unbelief.

Hume allowed himself at no time to be much disturbed by attacks in public on his religious opinions; for he regarded religion as a branch of philosophy, from which reason had been always excluded, and generally manners. But he could not be indifferent to the controversial spirit, when it followed him into private life. He was natural and free-spoken to a fault; while his scepticism was so predominant in him, that he could never be sure, for four-and-twenty hours together, that he might not either unwittingly give offence to his best friends, or be offended by them. Whenever he hurt his friends, he was too good natured not to feel uneasy. It was on these occasions that he discovered that Scotland was too narrow a place for him. His clerical intimates must, in return, have often felt themselves in a false position with him: disquieted, lest on the one hand they should grieve him by their differences or distrusts; on the other, lest they should be compromised by either his subtle questionings or his careless talk. Accordingly, when his most intimate acquaintance—the people whom he was meeting every day—set up the original *Edinburgh Review*, in 1754, Hume, the best writer of them all, was carefully excluded. To explain this, it has been suggested, that his infantile simplicity might have betrayed their secret, or that he was too tender-hearted for the necessary cruelties of a reviewer! But surely we need not go so far out of the way for a sufficient reason. The conductors of the *Review* did not venture to embarrass their fragile undertaking by the responsibilities belonging to his opinions, or by the suspicions belonging to his name. It will be easily conceived, that even in the ordinary intercourse of society, more active measures of self-defence on their part, may have been sometimes necessary. A letter from Hume to Blair, is fortunately preserved; which, while it shows how peremptorily Hume resented any interference with his opinions, shows also the falsehood of the rumour, that Hume's opinions were shared, or even tolerated, by Blair. We have already alluded to—what some have thought a suspicious circumstance—the suppression or the loss of Robertson's correspondence. But, there is no reason whatever for separating the case of Robertson, or of any other of the Edinburgh clergy, from that of Blair. We perceive, that one of Hume's letters, full of gossip about Rousseau, ends with saying, '*read this only to the initiated*;' words which, hastily seen in the Hume papers, are quite enough to have originated any calumny. But, the letter of which we are now speaking, is too direct and too premeditated (for it was sent from Paris) not to be sincere. Blair had

forwarded to Hume, Dr Campbell's reply to his Essay on Miracles. The first part of Hume's answer to this letter, is a criticism on Dr Campbell: But the rebuke with which it ends, might have satisfied even Dr Anderson, that, although the hope of Hume's conversion was not the basis of these friendships, yet, if Hume were not converted, the fault was not with Blair. 'Having said so much to your friend, who is certainly a very ingenious man, though a little too zealous for a philosopher; permit me also the freedom of saying a word to yourself. Whenever I have had the pleasure to be in your company, if the discourse turned on any common subject of literature, or reasoning, I always parted from you both entertained and instructed. But, when the conversation was diverted by you from this channel towards the subject of your profession—though I doubt not but your intentions were friendly towards me—I own I never received the same satisfaction: I was apt to be tired, and you to be angry. I would therefore wish, for the future, whenever my good fortune throws me in your way, that these topics should be forborne between us. I have long since done with all inquiries on such subjects, and am become incapable of instruction; though I own no one is more capable of conveying it than yourself.' A letter of this kind would have cooled an ordinary friendship: and it is highly to Blair's credit, that he accepted Hume on his own terms; had the virtue to love him living, and the manliness to protect his memory.

The circle in which Hume was living, (irritating as, in some respects, were the threads which held him to it,) was one which, as long, at least, as he remained at Edinburgh, he could ill afford to lose. To be sure there were two public reunions open to him. The Philosophical Society was established in 1754, for the purpose of philosophical debate; Hume and Smith both attended, but never opened their lips in it. The other flourished under the more familiar name of the Poker Club, and was established in 1762, to stir up the fire of the nation, on Scotland being refused a Scotch militia. In this club, Hume held the melo-dramatic office of Assistant-Assassin—having for his principal, in case their services should be wanted, a certain Andrew Crosbie, the Pleydell of *Guy Mannering*—a celebrated advocate in his day—standing counsel for the Evangelicals, and as remarkable as his assistant for the mildness of his disposition. Even from amidst the flatteries of Parisian wit and beauty, Hume affected to regret the freedom and hilarity of the Poker Club. A man, who had lived, year after year, cheerfully at Ninewells, had proved beyond all question, that society was by no means necessary to him. But, we are sorry to see that when it was within his reach, he had a secret

ambition about it, (by way of acknowledgment, apparently of his literary rank,) beyond what friends or clubs could satisfy. This feeling will account for the height to which he carried his love for Paris, and his dislike of London. So far we can understand. But a sensitiveness at not being sought after; or noticed by the aristocracy of Edinburgh, is the last infirmity of which we should have suspected him. A twelvemonth with Lord Anandale, ought to have hardened a weaker nature against this kind of misfortune. But he not only took their neglect to heart; he brooded over it. And it is evident, that when certain of the offenders, or any of their class, fell afterwards into his hands, he had a singular satisfaction in settling the balance. An opportunity occurred at Paris. One of his countrymen appeared before him there with a letter of introduction, and, unconscious of this secret grief, must have been as much startled at the time as we are now, at the temper in which he was received. The introduction was from Blair; and this is the answer:—‘Your recommendations have great weight with me; but, if I am not mistaken, I have often seen Colonel L——’s face in Edinburgh. It is a little late he has bethought himself of being *ambitious*, as you say, of being introduced to my acquaintance. The only favour I can do him, is to advise him, as soon as he has seen Paris, to go to a provincial town, where people are less shy of admitting new acquaintance, and are less delicate judges of behaviour. . . . I fancy there will not arrive at Paris many people who will have great claims of past civilities to plead with me.’ A letter to Adam Smith from Fontainebleau, a little earlier, is still fiercer: ‘You are ready to ask me, if all this does not make me very happy: no; I feel little or no difference. Can I ever forget, that it is the very same species, that would scarce show me common civilities, a very few years ago at Edinburgh, who now receive me with such applauses at Paris?’

Unluckily for Hume, another shadow came slowly creeping on. One, too, which a man of his kind and gentlemanly spirit would be still more unwilling to admit. Authors always, and sometimes their publishers, are ingenious in anticipating or explaining failures. Miller, in 1750, delayed publishing a new edition of Hume’s *Essays*, because of the earthquakes! In 1769, John Home accounted to himself for the thinness of the House, at the first representation of his *Fatal Discovery*, by supposing that the curiosity of the play-going world was all absorbed in the rival interest of the contemporary drama, then performing in the House of Lords, under the name of the *Douglas Cause*. In the same way, it was a favourite resource with Hume to attribute much of the reluctance of the English to do him, what he kept

calling justice, to the fact of his being a Scotchman. He would not allow either the vulgar popularity of Smollett, or the solid and well-earned fame of Robertson, to undeceive him. He could afford to despise the first. If Smollett sold out of hand 11,000 copies of his History, so much the worse for public taste. But Robertson's success must be accounted for on other grounds; And how?—as a means of spiting Hume! We find him, accordingly, writing from London in 1759 to Smith: 'Robertson's 'book' (the History of Scotland) 'has great merit; but it is 'visible that he profited here by the animosity against me.' So far, we are afraid, was written in sober earnest; though pleasantly carried off by intimating, that the same *odium tertii* had probably been equally favourable to the 'Theory of Moral 'Sentiments,' just published: 'I suppose the case was the same 'with you.' Four years later, (1763) Robertson was appointed Historiographer for Scotland. Hume had been proud of their friendship, both for its own sake, and as a thorn in the side of the common enemy. But the best friends and the best natures must not be tried too far. The jealousy which this unexpected preference excited in him, was sufficiently apparent to be observed by third persons. Dr Carlyle repeats, as part of the day's gossip, (1763) that, 'Honest David Home, (Hume,) with the heart of 'all others that rejoices most at the prosperity of his friends, 'was certainly a little hurt with this last honour conferred on 'Robertson. A lucky accident has given him relief.' The accident was an invitation to accompany Lord Hertford on an embassy to Paris. It was only an accident inasmuch as it was sudden and unlooked for. There can be little doubt but that it was done mainly at the suggestion of John Home, who, at this very time, was domesticated with Lord Bute. It was a good day's work—by whomsoever done; and all the better, if the doer of it was aware of all the circumstances. For, assuredly, there is no more melancholy form of dust and ashes, than those of a Friendship which has burnt out; And, among the last friendships which should ever be allowed to perish, was one that had united names which posterity will never part.

Hume had begun his History in Edinburgh in 1752. In 1762, when he brought it to a close, he was at Edinburgh still. From the feelings which we have been describing, it would appear that this continued residence was from necessity more than choice. During the interval, he often wished himself away. Often would he have fled from the ills to which he was exposed at Edinburgh, and even taken his chance of those which London might have in store for him; if his finances could have borne the change. In 1754, (the year of the proceedings against him in the General

Assembly) he writes to Dr Clephane,—‘ Show me that frugality could make L.120 a-year do, and I’m with you. A man of letters ought always to live in a capital, says Bayle.’ Three years later, (1757, the year of his resigning the librarianship) he returned to the subject; and desired the doctor to look out a room for him. ‘ A room in a sober, discreet family, who would not be averse to admit a sober, discreet, virtuous, frugal, regular, quiet, good-natured man—of a bad character!—I shall be in London next summer (to finish the Tudor volumes) probably to remain there during life. I shall then be able to spend L.150 a-year, which is the sum upon which, I remember, you formerly undertook me. But I would not have you reckon upon *probabilities*, as you then called them; for I am resolved to write no more. I shall read and correct, and chat and be idle, the rest of my life.’ In 1759 he expresses more plainly than ever, the uncomfortableness of his position at Edinburgh. But, on the other side, were to be set the supreme considerations, that Scotland was more suitable to his means, as well as the seat of his principal friendships. The *vis inertiae*, which made a single removal as intolerable to him as a fire, came next; and, lastly, an objection, (perhaps equal in reality to all the others,) the inability to make up his mind to what other place it would be prudent to remove.

We doubt whether London would have ever suited him. He had never seen it to advantage. He had first become acquainted with it, sick and sorry, on his way to Bristol. He then probably brought up with him a strong national antipathy.² At all events, he would certainly have been met by one; for, unless the ashes had been smouldering sullenly in 1734, it would have been impossible, some five-and-twenty years afterwards, that they should have been blown into a flame by vulgar breath, against the countrymen of Lord Bute. Hume’s second visit—that of an unknown youth, half Scotch half French, arriving from France to negotiate the publication of an unlucky Treatise on Metaphysics—was no great advance; and his year of bondage with Lord Annandale, in Hertfordshire, must have been too miserable to think of, without shuddering.

There is no reason for supposing that he was again in England, except passing through with General Sinclair, until 1758. In this year, however, he did come to London, in execution of the purpose he had announced to Dr Clephane; he took lodgings in Lisle Street, Leicester Fields, and remained there, not for life, as he had talked of, but about a twelvemonth. From all that appears, he was living in no society. Of the people whose names are of sufficient importance to be mentioned in

his letters, the only one with whom he pretends to any acquaintance, is a Mr Burke, or Bourke, 'an Irish gentleman who wrote 'lately a very pretty Treatise on the Sublime.' This tentative experiment of settling in London, therefore, evidently failed: and upon its failure, Hume concluded, that there was no good society in London, since he had found none: He might very easily have fallen into the same mistake at Paris. For, by his own account, its polite circles were in some respects more exclusive; and it was almost out of the memory of man that any British had been familiarly admitted into them; though an exception was afterwards made in his favour, by a strange caprice of fashion. Under these circumstances, any comparisons he might draw between the two capitals, must necessarily be unfair; however, he might think they justified his anti-English feelings. 'There 'is,' he says, 'a very remarkable difference between London and 'Paris, of which I gave warning to Helvetius, when he went 'over lately to England, and of which he told me, on his return, he was fully sensible. If a man have the misfortune, in 'the former place, to attach himself to letters, even if he succeeds, 'I know not with whom he is to live, nor how he is to pass his 'time in suitable society. The little company there that is worth 'conversing with, are cold and unsociable; or are warmed only 'by faction and cabal; so that, a man who plays no part in public affairs, becomes altogether insignificant; and if he is not 'rich, he becomes even contemptible. Hence that nation are 'relapsing fast into the deepest stupidity and ignorance. The 'taste for literature is neither decayed nor depraved here, as 'with the barbarians on the banks of the Thames.' [1764.]

After Hume's return from Paris, he resided in London full two years, (1766-68,) and was for the principal part of the time, Under Secretary of State to General Conway. He must now have had abundant means of correcting his error, if he had thought it worth his while. On the contrary, he seems to have kept aloof. He even declined Blair's introduction of Dr Percy to him in London, almost as unceremoniously as he had got rid of the Scotch Colonel sent to him at Paris. 'I thank you for the 'acquaintance you offer me of Mr Percy; but it would be impracticable for me to cultivate his friendship, as men of letters 'have here no place of rendezvous; and are, indeed, sunk and 'forgot in the general torrent of the world. If you can therefore decline, without hardship, any letter of recommendation, it 'would save trouble both to him and me.' Hume and Percy came together, notwithstanding. They had a point of agreement,—not Ancient Ballads, certainly; but a common dislike of Johnson. Yet Hume's excuse is not less strange; For there never

was a time, before or since, when London was less in want of points of reunion, where men of similar pursuits might meet. The Scotch themselves had a pleasant club, made up mostly of Hume's friends. Garrick was a member of it; and the house where it met was kept by a clever woman, sister to the celebrated Dr Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury. At first sight it may seem stranger still, so to speak of London in 1767; an era when Mrs Montagu was ambitious of distinguishing her house after the *Rambouillet* fashion; and when three years had not elapsed since Johnson had founded the Literary Club. But at his highest zenith, Hume probably continued equally a stranger at these renowned resorts. The people, indeed, who were worshippers of Johnson could have scarcely associated with, much less courted, Hume. Considering Johnson's occasional brutality, it would not have been safe for him and Hume to have met in private. Percy was stopped from even mentioning that he had taken Hume to dine with the chaplains at St James's, for fear of a scene of violence, if not hysterics. And it was only by taking advantage of Johnson being away, that half-a-dozen friends contrived to smuggle Adam Smith into the club.

That singular dictatorship, which Boswell has immortalised, might have been greatly in the way of Hume, and even of Smith, in the set where we should otherwise first expect to find them. Of this there can be no doubt. But, supposing them there, would they have succeeded? Might not Smith have been too formal and didactic? And is it not possible that the conversational pleasantries of Hume, which were so enchanting among his familiar friends, might not have borne transplanting among strangers? Garrick's critical interrogatory concerning the character of Smith's conversation ('*Eh, flabby?*') is not promising. Smith is supposed to have told Reynolds, that he never talked upon a subject which he understood, lest he might want it for his books! while, Horace Walpole, indignant at any body comparing Hume's abilities with those of Gray, declared that Hume's conversation was so *thick* that he believed he never understood a subject until he had written upon it. Can there be better proof, than the extravagance of these anecdotes,—that as yet a dinner-table and a drawing-room were not good conductors between the minds of the two countries? Put out by the novelty of the scene, or diffident of their Scotticisms and their dialect, both Smith and Hume were evidently different persons in London from what they were at home. So many Scotchmen in the preceding generation had written excellent English, that we have never been able to understand the grounds on which Hume and his contemporaries are supposed to have had so much difficulty in

English composition, and to have conferred so great a service on their countrymen by their success. But a written style is one thing, a colloquial style another; and it is very possible that the generation of which we are speaking, would have been much more confident that they could have marched gracefully through the chapters of a history, than have made good their way, without a fault, among the turns and idioms of the most common conversation. But—whether this were so or not in the case of Hume—there was another, and even a greater difficulty in the way of his holding pleasant intercourse with ‘the barbarians on the banks of the Thames.’ He disliked the people, and cherished the dislike.

At times Hume turned his eyes wistfully towards France. Its climate, its cheapness, the facility and gaiety of its society, had great attractions for him. When he was more than usually out of humour with his native land, he entertained his fancy with schemes of expatriation. Had they been all as philosophical as that which he unfolded to Dr Clephane, in 1756, we should have had more reliance on the ways and means which philosophy can supply, than we have at present:—‘It gives me great affliction, dear doctor, when you speak of gout and old age. Alas! you are going down hill, and I am tumbling fast after you. I have, however, very entire health, notwithstanding my studious sedentary life. I only grow fat more than I could wish. When shall I see you? God knows. I am settled here (Edinburgh); have no pretensions, nor hopes, nor desires, to carry me to court the great. I live frugally on a small fortune, which I care not to dissipate by jaunts of pleasure.’ All these circumstances give me little prospect of seeing London. Were I to change my habitation, I would retire to some provincial town in France; to trifle out my old age near a warm sun, in a good climate, a pleasant country, and amidst a sociable people. My stock would then maintain me in some opulence; for I have the satisfaction to tell you, dear doctor, that on reviewing my affairs, I find that I am worth L.1600 sterling, which, at five per cent, makes me near 1800 livres a-year; that is, the pay of two French captains.’ It is using brave words, perhaps, to call this philosophy. It is, however, no small part of it; and represents, we trust, the good sense and good temper of many hundreds of our half-pay officers scattered over France at this moment. There is nothing in the thoughts and feelings presented in this letter but what Hume’s best friends might wish to see there. It is as pleasant a foreign view of him as either of his two extremes—as either the quiet of his first provincial solitude, to which he fled, to ruminate upon his *juvenilia*

at La Flèche,; or the glory of his second visit, receiving the compliments of the nobility and court of France.

M. Camperon has translated anew Hume's History into French; and to judge by some of the blunders of his predecessors which he has put into a note, not before it was wanted. He observes that Hume's partiality to France ought to be a great merit with French readers. We are quite willing that it should be so. We have never heard this partiality objected to by any body; nor fault found with him because his tastes, both literary and social, were more French than English. Within certain limits, comparisons between different countries, their forms of civilization, and their manners, are open questions. The most favoured nation is not necessarily one's own. The injustice to which we object in Hume, is not comparative but positive; and Englishmen are entitled to complain much more of the feeling which pervades these Letters, than of any opinions stated in his History. The first germ of Hume's dislike of the English was probably, as we have said, a little leaven of ancient nationality. Unfavourable accidents rather encouraged than corrected it afterwards: and so it grew up to be the counterpart to Johnson's dislike of Scotland. By degrees, this hostile feeling was embittered by personal pique and wounded vanity. Like other great performers, who have come up from the provinces to the capital, and have met at first with coldness and with clamour, instead of plaudits, he took offence; and assuming the tone and attitude of an injured man, he opened a quarrel with the public, which he never closed.

Yet Hume's general nature was eminently sweet and reasonable. He was as sound, both in mind and body, as Johnson was the reverse. It would have appeared beforehand to have been about as difficult to make the one unhappy, as the other happy. But, on looking more closely into Hume's underlife, the one superstition by which his house was haunted (an ill regulated passion for literary fame,) was nearly proving as fatal to his peace, as Johnson's hundred spectres. All that was really serious by way of exception to his general character, is to be referred, first or last, to this head. He was turned forty at the time of his bringing out the first part of the History of the Stuarts. From the moment it appeared, it was (he conceived) universally neglected, and universally abused. Books have been written on the calamities of authors, and on their peculiar diseases, physical and moral. They contain many cases far more painful, but hardly a case more mortifying, than the effect which this disappointment produced on Hume. The first effects, impulsive and temporary, might be attributed to a sudden return of splenetic low spirits, brought back on him

by long confinement and vexation,—the same kind of moral jaundice, upon which in his youth he had consulted Cheyne. But the secondary effects—those which were consequential and reflective—cannot be passed over to that charitable hypothesis. At first, his mind was so unsettled, that he all but threw off his friends and forswore his country. His two letters to Mure of Caldwell, are humbling to authors, but most instructive to their friends. In 1754, Hume had begged of Mure to tell him his opinion of the first part of the *Stuarts*, and with freedom:—‘You know my docility.’ Mure, who should perhaps have known him better, took him at his word. It was not till 1757—and then, only after having received from Mure a commendation of the second part—that Hume sullenly restored him to a friendship, ‘confirmed by years and long acquaintance!’ How frail our security in each other, if for three long years, the too homely truths contained in the answer to the first letter can have held suspended in the air a friendship so confirmed!

Other authors may have been as touchy with their friends; but we do not remember any other, who ever thought of shaking the dust from off his feet and abjuring his country, merely because his countrymen would not read his books, nor receive him on his self-appointed mission, for their national historian. It is a pettishness, or flightiness, for which no testimony could be taken but his own. But that testimony we have; and, what is worse, we have it gravely given in as a dying declaration, at the distance of five-and-twenty years:—‘I was, I confess, discouraged; and had not the war been at that time breaking out between France and England, I had certainly retired to some provincial town of the former kingdom, have changed my name, and never more have returned to my native country!’ The storm passed off; but the channels which it had worn remained; and into these—whenever things went wrong with him—his distempered thoughts and feelings appear to have found their way. Through many years he persisted in reading every thing backwards which related to his *History*—which was the way, to be sure, in which he had composed it. Every new edition was only an acknowledgment of the injustice which had been done him; and a poor instalment of his just dues. Notwithstanding his confession, that the last series of his *History* had been better received immediately upon its publication than any of the earlier ones, this earnest of contrition was not sufficient to entitle the public to condonation. He would not come up to London till he had seen more justice done him. But appearances improved so rapidly, that he wrote home from Paris the succeeding year, that he saw that the public was coming round. Unfortunately, by this time,

he had contracted, through long indulgence, the worst of all complaints, the habit of complaining. It is in vain, that the statical chair assures the confirmed valetudinarian that he is gaining flesh; he must go on, weighing himself daily. Hume at last wore out the patience of his very publisher. Mr Millar cannot help expressing his surprise that a man of his excellent understanding and merit should be so dissatisfied with the sale; especially, as the booksellers, the only parties concerned in it, are, on the whole, astonished at its success, and are ready to give him any encouragement to proceed! Surely, where the booksellers were so joyfully astonished, the author might have been content. We may safely undertake to say, that no such correspondence ever passed between Samuel Simmons and John Milton; though two other five pounds depended on the number of the copies of the *Paradise Lost* that Simmons might have the luck to sell. The genius of the greatest minds is based on greatness of character, and can bide its time.

We would have no man stand up for his country or his party, right or wrong. But, an honest man will not be the worse for belonging to a party; while, he certainly may be much the worse for being a citizen only of the world. Hume was all along national rather than patriotic: And, unfortunately, his nationality was represented by the difference in his feelings towards England and Scotland; his patriotism by his indifference to both. Had he been out in Forty-five, he would have been amused at the notion of Banishment being a punishment; and he must have laughed at Lord Bolingbroke's declamations out of Seneca, upon exile. If there be any such virtue as patriotism, Hume hung far too loosely to his country. The equal affection to all sections of his countrymen—the *Tros Rutulusve* motto, which he paraded in the first edition of his *Essays* in 1741—made him as much of a spectator in domestic politics as Atticus himself. Six or seven years afterwards, he boasted that he had argued the case of the Protestant Succession—in a new Essay, brought out at a most critical moment—as coolly as if it had been a question between Pompey and Cæsar. But the truth is, that his nature was so neutral—so wanting in those sympathies, out of which patriotism grows—that it would not at any time have cost him more to change his allegiance than his coat. He was ready, therefore, to shift his lodgings any day, on the smallest provocation. Under these circumstances, it is particularly unfortunate that he should have been so sore at the denial of any imagined claim,—whether it was his lawful literary laurels, or his lawful pecuniary emoluments that were withheld from him. On setting out in life, he had made it a point, apparently with private persons as

well as with the public, to stand, in the first instance, on his extreme rights. It was not till these were recognised and secured, that he opened his better nature—struck the rock, and let the waters flow. Hume is far from being the only person, who has cavilled for the ninth part of a hair in the way of bargain, to give it afterwards, or thrice as much, to a deserving—or undeserving friend. At the beginning, there was more excuse for pertinacity about whatever money he could make out any sort of title to, in his case, than in that of most people. We wish, however, that he had let drop his demand against Lord Annandale for some small debated arrear of salary, as soon as he could afford to lose it. Still more do we wish that the extortionous demand on government, for half-pay, which he certainly had not earned, as judge-advocate, had never been preferred by him. His indefatigable perseverance in agitating on both these questions would prepare us for his being exceedingly dissatisfied with his position in the embassy at Paris, as long as it was precarious; but, we were not prepared for the violence of his feelings, or the nature of his threats. He had bargained with Lord Hertford for a pension of L.200, before agreeing to come out with him in the nondescript capacity of a kind of *attaché*, who was to do the business of secretary to the embassy, without any official character. For a time, this pension rested on no more solid footing than a simple order from the treasury; while, Mr Bunbury continued to hang on as secretary longer than Hume had reckoned upon. In this state of things, he roused himself to address a long letter to his friend Elliot, on his grievances. The fuming incense which the Parisians were now offering to him, as a sort of male Goddess of Reason, must, by this time have intoxicated the object of their idolatry, or he never would have closed his letter with the formal notice,—‘I have been accustomed to meet with nothing but insults and indignities from my native country; but if it continues so, “*ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habebis.*”’

The flaw which ran through Hume’s temper, the degree to which it occasionally disfigured the whiteness of the marble—as in this instance—cannot be more strikingly brought out than in Sir Gilbert’s answer. Of all the friends of Hume who are introduced to us in the present volumes, were we to judge them by their correspondence, we should place him first. Whether the matter in discussion be metaphysics or civil prudence, he is uniformly a wise adviser:—‘As to *ingrata patria, ne ossa quidem habebis*, don’t be at all uneasy. Notwithstanding all your errors, mistakes, and heresies in religion, morals, and government, I undertake you shall have at least Christian burial; and

‘perhaps we may even find for you a niche in Westminster Abbey besides. Your Lockes, Newtons, and Bacons had no great matter to boast of during their lives, and yet they were the most orthodox of men; they required no godfather to answer for them; while, on the other hand, did not Lord Hertford spread his seven-fold shield over all your transgressions? Pray, what pretensions have you either in church or state? for you well know you have offended both.’ A few months afterwards, Sir Gilbert was himself at Paris, to place his sons there. He left them to be looked after by Hume; But, from what he had seen, he felt so strongly the temptations by which he had also left his friend surrounded, that, having to write to him about the boys, he could not resist tacking on a word or two of counsel at the end:—‘Allow me in friendship also to tell you I think I see you at present upon the very brink of a precipice. One cannot too much clear their (? one’s) mind of all little prejudices; but partiality to one’s country is not a prejudice. Love the French as much as you will. Many of the individuals are surely the proper objects of affection; but, above all, continue still an Englishman.’ The reply is conclusive evidence that the interposition was not premature. ‘I cannot imagine,’ Hume replies, ‘what you mean by saying I am on a precipice. I shall foretell to you the result of my present situation, almost with as great certainty as it is possible to employ with regard to any future event. As soon as Lord Hertford’s embassy ends, which probably may not continue long, some zealot whom I never saw, and never could offend, finding me without protection, will instantly fly with alacrity to strike off that pension which the king and the ministry, before I would consent to accept of my present situation, promised should be for life. I shall be obliged to leave Paris; which I confess I shall turn my back to with regret. I shall go to Thoulouse or Montauban, or some provincial town in the south of France, where I shall spend, contented, the rest of my life, with more money, under a finer sky, and in better company than I was born to enjoy. From what human motive or consideration can I prefer living in England than in foreign countries? I believe, taking the continent of Europe, from Petersburg to Lisbon, and from Bergen to Naples, there is not one there who ever heard of my name, who has not heard of it with advantage, both in point of morals and genius. I do not believe there is one Englishman in fifty, who, if he heard I had broke my neck to-night, would be sorry. Some, because I am not a Whig; some, because I am not a Christian; and all, because I am a Scotsman. Can you seriously talk of my continuing

‘an Englishman? Am I, or are you, an Englishman? Do they not treat with derision our pretensions to that name, and with hatred our just pretensions to surpass and govern them? I am a citizen of the world; but if I were to adopt any country, it would be that in which I live at present; and from which I am determined never to depart, unless a war drives me into Switzerland or Italy.’

The idolaters, who were running after Hume to pick up anecdotes of his philosophy and *bonhomie*, would be more abashed at this correspondence, than probably the ‘Good David’ might think necessary. What makes his vehemence the more inexcusable, is, that all along he was well aware of the difficulties of his case. And, at last, when he was appointed secretary, he felt ‘inclined to be surprised how it had happened.’

But Hume’s ideas, when once taken up, soon became fixed ideas; not to be exorcised out of him by reason. In this manner, his resentments were gradually transformed into a second nature. By way of self-defence against his supposed public, he early inflamed himself into an equal contempt of their literary taste and of their manners: ‘As to the approbation or esteem of those blockheads, who call themselves the public, and whom a bookseller, a lord, a priest or a party, can guide, I do most heartily despise it.’ [1757.] His alleged unwillingness to show himself among his detractors, easily assumed a more comprehensive form, when his first objection was removed. ‘I have a reluctance to think of settling among the factious barbarians of London; who will hate me because I am a Scotsman, and am not a Whig; and despise me because I am a man of letters.’ Such was the *pronunciamento* of 1765; and the reluctance deepened with years. By the time that he had to thank Gibbon for the first volume of the ‘Decline and Fall,’ his accumulated contempt for a generation, of which, if Burke and Johnson were the first, they did not stand alone, had reached an alarming height. He accordingly turned his compliment to the author, by the expression of his surprise at so excellent a performance proceeding from an Englishman! ‘Your countrymen, for almost a whole generation, had given themselves up to barbarous and absurd faction: and had so totally neglected all polite letters, that I no longer expected any valuable production ever to come from them.’ ‘It is lamentable to think,’ he adds in a letter to Smith of the same date, and almost his last, ‘how much that nation has declined in literature in our time.’ [1776.]

Unfortunately, Hume’s horror at English politics kept pace with his contempt for English literature. The Wilkite mobs frightened him into a style of writing, and, we fear, almost of

thinking, which would have scarcely been excusable in a foreigner, or a woman: 'Our government,' he says to Elliot, 'has become a chimera, and is too perfect in point of liberty for so rude a beast as an Englishman: who is a man; a bad animal too, corrupted by a century of licentiousness.' [1770.]

In the same year, our veteran author went the length of remonstrating with Smith for going on with his *Wealth of Nations*—as a jest of course, but a bitter jest. 'How can you so much as entertain a thought of publishing a book full of reason, sense, and learning, to those wicked abandoned madmen? Nothing but a rebellion and bloodshed will open the eyes of that deluded people: though, were they alone concerned, I think it is no matter what becomes of them.' But Hume was in grain, and had been throughout life, a faint-hearted politician. He had got from history no confidence in man or in society—no notion, that freedom and civilisation might have resources in reserve, more than a match for the burden of the national debt, the size of London, or the turbulence of mobs. In 1746, the present times were so calamitous, and the future prospect so dismal, that he could not congratulate his friend Oswald on the success of his election. He tells him, that he should not be much disappointed, if the parliament then elected were the last parliament we should ever see in Britain. And so he went on, year by year, prognosticating evil; at the same time that he had not enough about him of the *ultimus Romanorum*, for his last moments to be saddened by the thought that he had nearly seen out his country. According to the views expressed to John Home, on their way to Bath, in his very last years, such, in his opinion, was the universal incapacity and want of genius, civil and military; so complete our national decay, that decline must be felt to be a feeble word. If Hume was right, it was a general break-up. The mind, which is displayed in the above extracts, is not encouraging; and, we admit, Mr Burton is entitled to ask, whether Hume at any time could have been safely trusted with a history, so complicated by passion and so easily misrepresented, as that of England.

But, in coming to these conclusions, Hume did little or no violence to his nature. This is evident from the tone of all his criticisms on society, government or literature. He had constitutionally less sympathy with the highest characteristics of English genius, intellectual or moral, than antipathy to their faults. He was much more affected, for instance, by the blemishes and irregularities of Bacon and of Shakspeare, than struck by their incomparable greatness. To him, Bacon was nothing more than 'a very estimable author and phi-

' philosopher: ' his style stiff and rigid: his wit unnatural and far-fetched. Shakspeare, ' a disproportioned and mishapen ' giant.' At the time all Europe resounded with the fame of Chatham, in Hume's eyes, Chatham was only ' a greater paradox ' than ever—not mad—that is, not madder than usual; ' but very certainly ' the villain,' who—strong in impudence and quackery, cunning and audaciousness—was about to thunder against the violation of the Bill of Rights, in not allowing the county of Middlesex to choose its members! With these views of contemporary politics and contemporary statesmen, we shall be the less surprised to learn, that in his opinion, the English constitution itself was a novelty and a failure.

Among the constituent elements of national character, none are more potent than religion. On this point we cannot be sure what view Hume really took of his contemporaries; for it is impossible to reconcile the opposite accounts which he has left of the state of religious feeling in Britain. He observes, in his ' Essay on National ' Character,' that our ancestors were sunk, a few centuries ago, into ' the most abject superstition: last century, they were inflamed ' with the most furious enthusiasm; and are now settled into ' the most cool indifference with regard to religious matters, ' that is to be found in any nation of the world.' This passage, first published in 1748, is retained in the deathbed edition of 1776. Yet, in a letter to Gibbon, written also while this last edition was passing through the press, he observes, that ' among ' many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in ' England prognosticated the fall of philosophy and decay of ' taste.' There can be no doubt, that within the period comprehended between the dates which we have just mentioned, a decided change had taken place, and in the direction intimated. On the other hand, there had never been a time when religious feeling was so low, that infidel writings would not have given great and general offence; or when the public would not have distinguished between the cautious latitudinarianism of Middleton and the daring scepticism of Hume. The assailant of the national religion of a people may *consider himself* their benefactor—though Montesquieu could not understand how that could be the case in England; but he ought to be prepared *to be considered by them* as a public enemy; until he shall have succeeded in freeing them from its spiritual dominion. Hume knew our nationality. For, in his History, speaking of the excessive praise which the English bestow upon their eminent writers, he has quietly remarked, that this is owing to ' the National spirit which prevails among them, ' and which forms their greatest happiness.' Yet, this spirit, and the happiness he attributes to it, he is always on the watch for a n

opportunity of wounding ; And when he has succeeded, and they show that they feel hurt, he complains loudly of being ill used.

But the intenser rays of Hume's resentment were to be brought into a still more narrow focus, and concentrated on a political party. The stages which his feelings traversed in passing to the point at which they settled down, can still be distinctly traced. The circumstance of his having written the only History of England which is pleasant reading to the general reader, has enabled him to effect his object and gratify his animosities, far beyond his utmost hopes. He has accomplished what Carte and Brady laboured for and longed for ; and, as far as the reaction to Toryism and to Tory theories of the constitution, which not long ago predominated, can be attributed to any book, it must be attributed to the subtle and attractive influence of Hume. However, the varnish is wearing off ; and the mischief apparently is nearly over. A polemical exposure and refutation, chapter by chapter, has indeed yet to be set forth ; And, it is a pity that no competent person has been induced to prepare an edition of the History, with this kind of commentary. Mean time, there is a remedy at hand. Historical conversions or perversions are now limited to persons who choose to be deceived. For, since the publication of Mr Hallam's 'History of the English Constitution,' no reader of Hume, who is really desirous to know the truth upon that most important subject, can have any difficulty in discovering it.

Some of the peculiarities which we have already had occasion to mention, in speaking of the life and character of Hume, might be expected seriously to affect him as a historian. He had (he says) found the prevalent opinions concerning English history to be those of the Revolution, and of the ministers who had governed under the new settlement. To these the nature of his mind placed him in opposition. He had indeed called himself a Whig some years before ; but, he allowed, he was a very poor one. Out of the regions of speculation, and, except in what regarded his literary glory, he was constitutionally cold and tranquil. In common with his most distinguished predecessors in scepticism, Montaigne, and Bayle, and Hobbes, his inclinations in government leaned against political freedom ; and even against the conduct and institutions to which political freethinking leads. As soon as he thought the tide was turning in favour of his history, he recognised, in his growing authority, the reward of having always kept at a distance from the tempting extreme of liberty ; and of having maintained a due regard to magistracy and established government. His desire of literary distinction attracted him to debated questions, and sometimes to the weaker side. When he

communicated to Burke and Blair Rousseau's secret of composition, he might have added, that he himself had also long ago perceived that a certain degree of singularity was required for catching the attention of the public, in these latter days. The theory was a very acceptable one to a writer of so much ingenuity and refinement. A love of singularity implies a love of contradiction; and though he was both surprised and shocked at the extent of the resistance he met with, the belief that he had earned the hatred of popular politicians and ministers of state—of Chatham, Grenville, and the Bedfords—was a certain satisfaction to his innovating and independent spirit.

But whatever the aggregate of these biasses, moral and intellectual, might come to, it is very possible that Hume was not in the least conscious of them, at the commencement; especially when he compared himself with the party writers who had gone before him. He entered upon English history as upon a possession, either vacant or worse than vacant, vilely occupied by a succession of literary settlers, without either taste or truth. On the one side were ranged Filmer and Brady, Echard, Carte, and Salmon, along with the nobler name of Clarendon. On the other, Rapin, Oldmixon, Ralph, and the like, the declamatory republicanism of Sidney, and the misleading zeal and honest credulity of Burnet. Between these two extremes there was ample room for one or more impartial histories, which lovers of truth might read with pleasure. Hume came forward as a neutral power—the personification of abstract justice—in whose presence the belligerents were to lay down their arms, and gratefully submit to his arbitrement on their conflicting claims. It is clear, from the evidence of at least a dozen letters, that, on finishing the Reigns of the two first Stuarts, he thought he had perfectly maintained the neutrality which he had promised. Friends, both Whig and Tory, who were admitted to the intoxicating privilege of seeing the proof sheets, encouraged him in the delusion: But publication opened the eyes even of friends. The unpopularity of his first volume appears to have been distributed nearly equally among all parties: at least, in his first indignation against them all, he made no distinction; beyond noticing a small excess on the part of the Whigs—so small that the Reigns of the two last Stuarts were expected to reduce, and indeed remove it. In his dying memorandum, the only reason which he can even then assign for the national outcry he had provoked, is 'the generous tear,' which he had presumed to shed over Charles and Strafford!

In marshalling the priorities among the different objections

which were taken to his writings, Hume was long unwilling to give precedence to the offence given by his irreligion. He admitted, however, that in this respect he had been guilty of some imprudencies in his first volume; and, though he thought they were used as pretexts for decrying him, by parties who were resolved on other accounts to lay hold of pretexts, yet he acknowledged in his private letters, that what he had said about religion should have received some softenings: In consequence, he annexed an apologetic preface to the second volume. In this volume he came less in contact with religion; it lay, he said, more out of his way: But he boasted, that he had maintained throughout 'the same unbounded license' in his politics which had given so much offence before. The utmost concession to which he condescended was to wish, that the two volumes had come out together: Since, as the first volume bore a little of a Tory aspect, and the second of a Whig, neither the one party nor the other would, in that case, have had the least pretence for reproaching him with partiality.

On the publication of the second volume, the reaction which Hume had anticipated, in some degree took place; but so feebly that he was more irritated than satisfied. Yet, what ought he to have expected? He might separate himself from the common herd of the advocates of the Stuarts, upon one or two incidental facts, (as afterwards on the character of Mary;) but the general tendency and temper of his History had been Tory enough even for the Jacobites. Lord Balcarras, who had been out in '15, complimented him upon it: And, it was, undoubtedly, on a similar understanding that Strange, the Jacobite Engraver, who steadily refused to engrave the House of Hanover, presented him afterwards with a set of his engravings, by way of acknowledgment for his services. In whatever happy degree of ignorance Hume may have been lapped concerning his own true state of mind and his freedom from all bias, he had not been long engaged with the Tudors before he resigned himself to his natural tendencies. The thesis, or rather brief, which he here undertook, was the justification of the Stuarts by the example of the Tudors. He then warmed with the case as it opened out to him; and committed himself to make it good, as on a personal quarrel. He had got as far as the Reformation, and had nothing more to tell Elliot than that he should be able to make a smooth and well-told tale of it. He was not able as yet to throw much light into it, (1757.) But, as he went on, he found that, though much light perhaps might not be to be thrown into it, much might yet be borrowed from it: For, on finishing the Tudor line, he exultingly told Robertson, 'You

‘ will see what light and force this history of the Tudors bestows
‘ on that of the Stuarts. Had I been prudent I should have
‘ begun with it. I care not to boast ; but I will venture to say,
‘ that I have now effectually stopped the mouths of all those
‘ villanous Whigs who railed at me.’ The boast was rash.
The Whigs loudly protested against both means and end. The
reign of Elizabeth was as obnoxious as the reign of Charles.
Hume took their opposition so much to heart, that it must have
been difficult for him to keep up appearances before the public.
He certainly kept up none any longer with his friends, as his
correspondence shows. The real extent of his partiality can
have been no secret to him from this time ; nor the facility with
which he yielded to it ; nor the arts and practices by which he
strove to give it effect.

This was his frame of mind when he contracted with Millar
for the completion of his History. Having tried back from
the Stuarts to the Tudors, a further contradiction was now be-
fore him—that, of ending where he ought to have begun. The
groundwork of the whole had to be built in last ; and the skill,
as well as the honesty of the builder, were severely tried in ac-
commodating it to the superstructure already raised. Hume
confessedly wearied of the drudgery of thus at last digging for his
foundation. Nevertheless, though he complained that his man-
ner of composing was slow, and that he had great difficulty in
satisfying himself, he made short work of it. In less than three
years, the history of fourteen centuries was begun and closed.

We believe that Hume described correctly, in his letter to
Adam Smith, the reason of his beginning his History with
the Stuarts. He conceived that the interest of modern politi-
cs began there. It was an after-thought, (the consequence
of the controverted questions, in which his mode of treating the
period had involved him,) that he had fixed upon it, as the com-
mencement of the misrepresentations which the spirit of party
had introduced into English history. But the moment that this
idea got possession of him, he looked out for facts to support his
system—and for such facts only—and he wrote for ever afterwards
in the spirit of a polemic. His actual misrepresentations are ac-
cordingly much more distinct and palpable in the reigns of the
Henries and the Edwardses, than in those of the Charleses and
the Jameses. He had now staked his literary credit upon his
hypothesis. Otherwise, the mere historical question—what was
the degree of freedom in the ancient English constitution—would
scarcely have betrayed an ordinary writer into the loss of temper
and sacrifice of truth ; much less a man, who prided himself on
his philosophy and candour ; and who was as little of an antiqua-

rian as of a poet. One should have thought, that even a jury of antiquaries might have been safely trusted to compare the reigns of Elizabeth and Charles the First with untroubled pulses; and that nobody for the last hundred years would have given a pin to choose, whether the title by which William the Conqueror came in, was Conquest, in the military, or in the legal sense. To the reader of Hume's History, however, (and who is not a reader of it?) he has made it a point of great importance; for he has made it a test of credit. On his first correction (1759) of his History of the Stuarts, he was satisfied that he should put his account of that period of English history beyond controversy. He not only convinced himself that he had succeeded; but he believed also, that by his success he had offended the Whigs beyond forgiveness. So that, some years afterwards, he could attribute Mr Grenville's procrastination, about his Secretaryship to the Embassy, to no other cause: 'I know that I have affirmed, and, what is worse, have proved, that Queen Elizabeth's maxims of government were full as arbitrary as those of the Stuarts. I know that this proposition, though now an undoubted and acknowledged truth, is contrary to the principles of sound Whiggery. I know also, that Mr Grenville, as a sound Whig, bore me no good-will on that account; but I did not really think that his quarrel could have gone to such an extremity.'

An array of precedents fortunately is not necessary on this occasion. For there happens to be in existence, an authority, in few words and small compass, which must settle the question with all people open to conviction. A comparison between his own government and that of Elizabeth, was made by Charles the First himself: It was made to no less a body than his Parliament; and was made for a no less solemn object than to settle the terms of peace and reconciliation. The circumstance is recorded by Clarendon; and may have escaped Hume's slight researches; for Clarendon's mention of it occurs in one of the suppressed passages, for the first time printed in 1826: 'At the opening of the parliament, (which was on the third day of November 1640,) the king very frankly delivered himself to the Lords and Commons, that he put his whole affairs into their hands, and was resolved to follow their advice, both in order to an agreement with the Scots, and in repairing the grievances at home, which he confessed the necessities of the times had brought upon his people. *All those, whether in church or state, he was willing should be removed; and desired that all things might be reduced to the good order and practice of Queen Elizabeth; which by the people of England were sure looked upon with the greatest reverence; and so he left them.*'

Can words convey a more direct and public recognition of the fact, that the government of the Stuarts had been a change from that of the Tudors, and that the change was felt to be a grievance? Had Hume been present, would he have had the assurance to tell the King and his assembled Parliament, (as a hundred years afterwards he told his own contemporaries,) that the notion of any such change as the royal speech supposes, was a vulgar error? On that solemn and critical occasion, many men must have been present who had had personal experience of both governments; and who were thoroughly conversant with the maxims of both periods. Six years sooner, and this royal declaration would have been made in the presence of Elizabeth's Attorney-General, Sir Edward Coke. If the Parliament-men of the Long Parliament would have started at the violent hypothesis of the historian, they must have treated with still less ceremony some of the facts by which he attempted to support it. How, for instance, must they have received his garbled version of the debates of their predecessors under Elizabeth—recollecting them as they had taken place, and as they have been faithfully handed down to us by D'Ewes and Townsend, where Hume alone could know them?

Whenever a new edition of his History was called for, Hume went carefully over the text. He struck out such superfluous reflections as impeded the narrative, and those Scotticisms which disfigured the style: But, above all, he expunged whatever symptoms he could still discover of the 'plaguy prejudices of Whig-gism,' with which he affected (we should think ironically) to believe that he was too much infected when he began the work: 'As I began the History with these two reigns,' (James I. and Charles I.,) 'I now find that they, above all the rest, have been corrupted with Whig rancour; and that I really deserved the name of a party writer, and boasted without any foundation of my impartiality,' (1763.) Mr Brodie will be amused at the alleged mistakes and oversights, which he imagined he was now correcting. He must himself have had more than an inkling of the truth. For, a little later, he intimates an apprehension that he was overdoing it; still he could not resist. No more errors of fact were now left for him to retract, it seems—only errors in opinion: 'I am running over again the last edition of my History, in order to correct it still further. I either soften or expunge many villanous, seditious Whig strokes, which had crept into it. I wish that my indignation at the present madness, encouraged by lies, calumnies, imposture, and every infamous art usual among popular leaders, may not brow me into the opposite extreme. I am, however, sensible

‘ that the first editions were too full of those foolish English prejudices, which all nations, and all ages disavow.’ (1770.) Perhaps Mr Brodie will take the trouble to compare the first and last editions ; and let us know how far the tone in which Hume mentions his revisions, is not a way of talking which he had got into, and a representation of what he was feeling rather than of what he was doing. His private feelings towards the Whigs of his own day, unluckily fell in too readily with his public apprehensions. He had brooded over his imaginary wrongs till he was a believer, after the manner of Rousseau, in something like a conspiracy against him. It is really melancholy to read, among the pleasant gossip with which he entertained John Home on their way to Bath, in his last illness, the following revelation :— ‘ From the treatment Mr Hume met with in France, he recurred to a subject not unfrequent with him—that is, the design to ruin him as an author, by the people that were ministers at the first publication of his History, and called themselves Whigs ; who, he said, were determined not to suffer truth to be told in Britain. Amongst many instances of this, he told me one which was new to me. The Duke of Bedford, (who afterwards conceived a great affection for Mr Hume,) by the suggestions of some of his party friends, ordered his son, Lord Tavistock, not to read Mr Hume’s History of England.’ What an instance of a Whig conspiracy ! Lord Chatham, we know, did the same by Lord Camelford. Supposing both Lord Chatham and the Duke of Bedford to have proceeded upon the same political exceptions, and on political exceptions only, there surely can be no question but that in both cases they acted as private persons, (as fathers or guardians,) not as Whig leaders or Ministers of State, plotting the ruin of an author for speaking the truth.

Hume completed his History in 1762. He had some public business, of more or less importance, to transact, the two or three years he was in office ; and he got angry, and published a most unnecessary statement of his rupture with Rousseau. Excepting these, he appears to have never afterwards resumed his pen, for any weightier purpose than that of revising his former works, and writing letters. He says, in one of these letters, that, for four months, he had never gone to bed and got up, in the same mind as to where he should fix his domicile. He might have said as much, and for more than as many years, about continuing his History. On setting off for Paris, he justified to his bookseller his acceptance of his diplomatic appointment, on the ground of the use which it might be to him as an historian ; and he promised to collect carefully all the materials which should cast up. The only step, however, ever taken by him towards a perfor-

mance of this promise, was, running over King James's autograph memoirs, deposited in the Scotch College at Paris, and picking some curious passages out of them. When he first discovered them, he thought he had found a great treasure. The originals have been since lost: But, from his way of noticing them in his letters, and from the little use he made of them when he next revised his History, it is evident that in losing them we have merely lost a curiosity, not a thing of any value. What he mentions of them is important, however, in one sense; especially as coming from Hume. 'All the discoveries I made in King James's Memoirs *make against himself and his brother*; and he is surely a good enough witness on that side; But I believe him also a man of veracity; and I should have put trust in any matter of fact that he told from his own knowledge. . . . Father Gordon, of the Scots College, who has an exact memory of King James's Memoirs, was so kind as to peruse anew my History during the Commonwealth and the reigns of the two brothers; and he marked all the passages of fact where they differed from the memoirs. They were surprisingly few; which gave me some satisfaction.' When every objection which he had ever started to his continuing his History had been removed, and when offers of papers, public and private, poured in on him from all sides, he abandoned the design. The old saying about poets—that they must be fed, not fattened—proved equally true of our historian. He had now too good an income. He discovered also, that, if what he had already written would not secure him his place in literature, nothing he could now add to it would raise him higher. We must allow also for the silent influence of another cause. *Obrepat non intellecta senectus!* According to Dr Black, his health had begun to fail some years before his death; long before he was himself aware of it—which he seems only to have been during the last year. It would be otherwise difficult to justify him, for not having taken more active measures towards fulfilling the condition on which, in 1768, he received his additional pension from the King.

The following communications leave no room for mistake with respect to this condition. 'General Conway demitted his office, and my commission expired of course. Lord Hertford then told me, that he and his brother had made a point with the King and the ministers, that, in consideration of my services, I should have some further provision made for me; which was immediately assented to, only loaded with *this condition* by the King, that I should seriously apply myself to the consummation of my History. I replied to my Lord, that I did not think I had any further claim, either on the public or his family; and that, for a man of letters and a good economist, I

‘had reason to esteem myself very rich.’—(*Hume to Madame de Boufflers, April 1768.*) ‘I find the chains which attach me to this country multiply upon me. The King has given me a considerable augmentation of my pension, expressing, at the same time, his expectation that I am to continue my History.’—(*Hume to the Marchioness de Barbantane, May 1768.*)

The similarity between this passage in the life of Hume and a corresponding passage in the life of Robertson, is not a little singular: And the latter should have thought of this, when he laughed at the simplicity of a bookseller in paying Hume before-hand. By the negotiations which passed between Robertson and Lord Cathcart, 1761,* it appears that Carlyle had good grounds for stating, that Robertson’s patrons supposed that the consideration of the revival in his favour (1763) of the office of Historiographer for Scotland, was another History of Britain. On the one hand, the King’s wish to see a History of England from his pen, and Lord Bute’s promise, that the encouragement should be proportioned to the work, are distinctly stated; on the other, Robertson’s disclaimer of ‘any impatience to enter into possession before he could set to work with that particular task for which his appointments were to be given.’ Immediately on the publication of the History of Scotland, Lord Chesterfield had offered to propose in the House of Lords, that public encouragement should be given to the historian of Scotland to proceed to the History of England. But, at that time, he had only one answer to make to assurances of encouragement, to solicitations of friends, and offers from booksellers. It was this: ‘Mr Hume, with whom, notwithstanding the contrariety of our sentiments both in religion and politics, I live in great friendship, was at that time in the middle of the subject. No consideration of interest or reputation would induce me to break in upon a field of which he had taken prior possession; and I determined that my interference with him should never be any obstruction to the sale or success of his work.’ Two years later (1761) the case was changed—at least Robertson thought so. Hume’s history would have not only had its first run, but would have taken its proper station in the literary system, before any work of his could possibly appear. ‘Besides,’ (he adds,) ‘our manner of viewing the same subject is so different or peculiar, that (as was the case in our last books) both may maintain their own rank, have their own partisans, and possess their own merit, without hurting each other.’

On further consideration, it is probable that Robertson dis-

* The letters will be found in the second section of Dugald Stewart’s *Life of Robertson*.

covered that it would be impossible to go over the same ground again after Hume—differing from him so much in politics and religion—without the appearance, at least, of violence to their friendship. At all events, Robertson never began his history; and though, two years after the death of Hume, he was thinking of *continuing* that of his friend, yet the thought died away almost in its birth. It seems to have perished under those formidable obstacles, by which recent history is always so much obstructed—the want of materials, and the danger of offence. The negotiations with Robertson for a History of England were so public that they must have been known to Hume, (though he never mentions the subject,) and cannot have been agreeable to him. Had this History been written and published during Hume's lifetime, we hope, and indeed believe, that the kindly part of his nature would have got the better of all rivalry; and that he would have been able to review a History of England by Robertson, with as much generosity as he lived to show to that of Henry. A parallel between the different views and methods of Hume and Robertson,* in treating at length so great a subject, would have been a noble study. It is not the fault of Lord Bute and George III. that we cannot make it—that there is no Whig history of England which is readable—nor a better continuation of Hume than Smollett. Men of letters should feel grateful for that royal impartiality, which went even further still, when it pensioned both Hume and Beattie, Johnson and Rousseau.

We lost, it is probable, through Hume's engagement with Lord Hertford, two or three more volumes of his unrivalled history. It is a loss, which can never be identically replaced; neither by the same concise, yet lucid, and sometimes pathetic, narrative;

* The Rev. Mr Maitland, librarian at Lambeth, has lately written a book, and called it *The Dark Ages*. On the strength of having corrected in it certain errors into which Jortin and Robertson had fallen, he speaks of 'Jortin, Robertson, and other such very miserable second-hand writers!' If Mr Maitland had respectfully pointed out their errors, men of letters would have been obliged to him. As it is, we leave Jortin (and we hope that our confidence is not misplaced) to the protection of the Archbishop. With respect to Robertson, his historical learning satisfied Gibbon—his historical philosophy commanded the eloquent admiration of Burke. Two generations, and foreign countries, have ratified the judgment of his contemporaries. If such incredible presumption, as Mr Maitland has rocked himself into in his library chair, comes from living among old books in Lambeth Palace—commend us to a circulating library and the last new novel!

nor by the same transparent views of society; nor by the same close observation of human affairs in the logical development of effects from causes. With the correctives which are now within the reach of every reader, there is nothing to be afraid of in Mackintosh's anticipation — that, notwithstanding its great defects, Hume's History of England will be at last placed at the head of historical compositions. Meantime, his admirers must be content with knowing, that he earned by it his release from literary labour; and in believing that, satiated with study, and provoked by criticisms, he was happier, on the whole, in the new existence into which he passed.

At the time, it was plainly a relief to him to remove for a while from Edinburgh. And while Lord Hertford's acquaintance were entertained at the companion whom the Scotch authorities had provided for him — helped, perhaps, a little now, as afterwards, by Madame de Boufflers, who was in England in 1763 — the favour of a nobleman so distinguished as Lord Hertford for his piety and decorum, was an answer to all objectors. It worked, in a moment, such a change in Hume's position, as Elliot could compare only to regeneration. Hume felt that now he need not scruple applying to his friends, to exert their interest to serve him: 'Henceforth, nobody can be afraid to patronise me, either as a Scotchman or a Deist.' He had good grounds, he said, for knowing, that he stood high in the graces of even his most orthodox Majesty, George the Third. To Paris, however, the fame of his learning, his infidelity, and *bonhomie*, had gone forth before him. Madame de Boufflers, mistress to the Prince de Conti, and at the very top of French society, had been so enchanted by his writings, that she had introduced herself to him by letter. But no form of words could shadow out the triumph, which was waiting for him, when he arrived in person. To call him 'the mode,' as Horace Walpole does, is so faint an outline of the fact, that it looks like jealousy. His reception was a rage, *une manie, un fureur*.

Hume had apprehended, on removing to his new position, that he had set out too late, and that it was unsuitable to his age and temper; And his first visit to Fontainebleau certainly embarrassed and confounded him. Every body, from the royal family downwards, seemed trying to persuade him that they considered him one of the greatest geniuses in the world. He was convinced that Louis the Fourteenth never, in any three weeks of his life, *suffered* so much flattery; and he assured Ferguson, that he found himself wishing twice or thrice a-day for his easy-chair, and his retreat in St James's court. He got accustomed to it, however, in the course of a few weeks; and expresses himself

satisfied, from the homage paid to himself and to Rousseau, that no nation was ever so fond of genius as the French. The Dauphin (whose religion, or irreligion is still under controversy) was so much his admirer, that, on going to Versailles, the Dauphin presented him, as was the custom, to his three children. 'These children had an eventful life before them; for they were, afterwards, Louis XVI., Louis XVIII., and Charles X.' But they can hardly ever have been parties to a droller scene than this. At their several ages of nine, eight, and six, the little princes were set up to deliver prepared harangues to David Hume, on his Philosophy and History. The youngest, poor child, could only mumble out a few unintelligible words, having forgot his panegyric by the way.

Hume was a principal figure in still stranger scenes, through the favour of the ladies. From his rebuff to Mrs Mallet for joining their deism in the same bracket, ('We deists should 'know one other,') and from his admission to Dr Gregory, that scepticism might be too sturdy a virtue for a woman, it should seem that he had no great fancy in the abstract for a female deist; but his lady friends at Paris would not hear of being excluded by any such Salique law. Lord Charlemont had made his acquaintance some sixteen years before at Turin, and retained a lively recollection of his broad Scotch accent, his laughable French, the imbecility of his countenance, the corpulence of his person, and of his looking in his uniform, for all the world, like a train-band grocer. It was now his good fortune to fall in with him at Paris. He found him in frequent attendance on ladies' toilettes; while, at the opera, his broad unmeaning face was usually to be seen between *deux jolis minois*. Since the exhibition in the old *Fabliaux*, of Aristotle in love—down upon all-fours, and his mistress riding on his back—there has been no representation of philosophy so out of character, as it is shown us in the portrait of Hume by Madame d'Epinay. In one of the pantomimic *tableaux* then in fashion, the part of Sultan was assigned to him; whose prevailing words were to win over to his love two reluctant captives. He was placed on a sofa, with the two prettiest women in Paris beside him; and there, he kept looking steadily in the face, thumping his knees and stomach, and repeating again and again, *Eh bien! mes demoiselles. Eh bien! vous voilà donc; eh bien! vous voilà, vous voilà ici?* This lasted for a quarter of an hour—when he was disgracefully turned over to officiate as a spectator; but so faithful is the sex, that the women persisted in considering a supper incomplete without him. 'They believe in Mr Hume,' (writes Horace Walpole;) 'the only thing in the world 'that they believe implicitly; which they must do; for I defy

‘them to understand any language which he speaks.’ Two of the houses of most fame, kept open at this time for men of wit and learning by celebrated women, were the hostile houses of Madame du Deffands and Madame Geoffrin. Hume’s friendship with D’Alembert was in his way with the first; his devotion to Madame de Boufflers with the second. There is no doubt of Madame de Boufflers’ merits, nor of Hume’s sincere regard for her; but when we remember Horace Walpole’s description of the two women of whom she was composed, Hume’s letters to her startle us by an air of sentiment, which, in a man of his age and character, it seems equally out of place to feel or to put on. Before a year is over, we find him assuring her, that, among other obligations, which he owed her without number, ‘she had saved him from a total indifference towards every thing in human life.’ Whatever fault Walpole might find with the taste of the national simile by which he proceeds to enforce his claim upon her, he could hardly reproach it for being pedantic: ‘I will never, but with my life, be persuaded to part with the hold which you have been pleased to afford me; you may cut me to pieces, limb by limb—but, like those pertinacious animals of my country, I shall expire still attached to you, and you will in vain attempt to get free.’ If he could dispose of his fate, nothing, he says, would have been so much his choice, as to live always where he might cultivate her friendship. On his quitting Paris, he complains of the pains of absence; of the continual want he is feeling of her society; that he had accustomed himself to think of her as a friend from whom he was never to be long separated. A little later, our Corydon or Colin is looking forward to their reunion: ‘I have a project of accompanying you to Lyons. Would to God it were possible for us to take our flight thence into Italy, and from thence, if you would, into Greece! Might we not settle in some Greek island, and breathe the air of Homer—or Sappho, or Anacreon! in tranquillity and great opulence?’ Great opulence is a prudent condition to sexagenarian romance. But, even with this condition, we are as much at a loss to recognise our old acquaintance, or to know what to make of him in his new disguise, as when we left him—reiterating *eh bien*, and mistaking his stomach for his heart.

But the sex were no longer undisputed sovereigns in French society. They had admitted the philosophers to share their sovereignty; and were obliged to yield a part of their empire. Of the change which accordingly had already taken place, and of the further changes which were in progress, there could be no phenomenon more characteristic than the several experiences of Horace Walpole and David Hume, who at this time met in

Paris. Walpole was a man of wit and of the world; and was much more than three-fourths French. But, he was a Frenchman of the age of Madame de Sévigné and of Louis XIV. Hume was a reserved and studious recluse; sufficiently French in his literary and social tastes; though unfortunately so little French in point of language, that he was with difficulty understood. To make up for these deficiencies, he was the *grand et gros philosophe Ecossais*; whose name, only two or three years before, had been struck out of Helvetius's MS. by the Paris censors. Walpole was now admitted into the salons, as any other handsome piece of furniture of the time of Louis Quatorze. But Hume was carried about and venerated as an idol. The judgment which they severally formed upon the taste and agreeableness of French society, followed the nature of their reception in it. 'Hume' (Walpole observes) 'gratefully admires the tone of Paris—having 'never known any other tone.' Of all the innovations upon the ancient canons of good company, the one which most delighted Hume, while it evidently in the same degree offended Walpole, was the circumstance, that you now met the men of letters every where. The conversation had become too literary to please Walpole. Its style he thought solemn and pedantic; or only animated by disputes. They wanted nothing but George Grenville and Lord Lyttleton (if the latter would only once more turn free-thinker) to make their conversations, or rather dissertations, the most tiresome upon earth. According to his fancy, their taste was worst of all; for, when they read our authors, their favourites were Richardson and Hume.

On one point, and on one alone, are Walpole and Hume agreed in their description of this celebrated society. They both testify to its predominant unbelief. After having resided a few months in it, Hume addresses a very interesting letter to his clergy friends at Edinburgh in common; in which he notices particularly 'the universal contempt of all religion among both sexes, and 'among all ranks of men.' It is impossible to reconcile this statement with the interpretation, which some matter-of-fact people have put upon a passage in another letter, where, mentioning the men of letters whom he found at Paris, he tells Blair, 'that it would give him, and Jardine, and Robertson, great 'satisfaction to find that there was not a single Deist among 'them.' The proper reading of this pleasantry is not far to seek. Diderot, speaking to Romilly when a young man, about Hume, illustrated by a singular anecdote the objection of Diderot's *compatriotes* to the limited nature of Hume's scepticism: 'Je vous dirai un trait de lui; mais il vous sera un peu 'scandaleux peut-être, car vous Anglais vous croyez un peu en

‘ Dieu ; pour nous autres, nous n’y croyons guères. Hume dîna dans une grande compagnie avec le Baron D’Holbach. Il était assis à côté du Baron ; on parla de la religion naturelle : “ Pour les Athées,” disait Hume, “ je ne crois pas qu’il en existe ; je n’en ai jamais vu.” “ Vous avez été un peu malheureux,” répondit l’autre, “ vous voici à table avec dix-sept, pour la première fois.”’ This anecdote agrees perfectly with Hume’s recollection of himself and his Paris friends, as long afterwards dropped out incidentally, in a curious letter to Sir John Pringle about the young Pretender. After observing, that Lord Marischal (Keith) and Helvetius had told him that the young Pretender had learned from the philosophers at Paris to affect a contempt of all religion, he adds, ‘ they thought that they were ascribing to him an excellent quality. Indeed, both of them used to laugh at me, for my narrow way of thinking in these particulars.’ The same thing happened to Voltaire—who, also, had to inform his atheist admirers, that they did him too much honour in assuming that he was one of them ; that he had laughed indeed at St Medard and the Bulle ; but the universe embarrassed him—that a clock supposed a clockmaker—and that, if there had not been a God, it would have been necessary to invent one. Grim, too, we recollect, makes himself very merry with the Patriarch’s strange weakness, in still sticking to his *Dieu Remunérateur Vengeur*.

Lord Chesterfield approached nearer, it would seem, to Hume than Walpole, in thinking that the good company of Paris continued to be better than that of London, however much its ancient standards of taste might be falling into disrepute. But he agreed with Walpole on another point of much more importance. The men of the world at that time seem to have been wiser in their generation, than the great paper politician. Ten or twelve years earlier, among Lord Chesterfield’s instructions to his son, we find him putting him upon his guard against a social current, as powerful as that of Niagara, which he perceived was setting in : ‘ All the symptoms which I have ever met with in history, previously to great changes and revolutions in government, now exist and daily increase in France.’ (1753.) To be sure, he rather damaged his prediction, by supposing that the rest of Europe would be all the quieter. Walpole remarks, as he is moving up and down their serious, though brilliant salons ; ‘ Good folks ! they have no time to laugh. There is God and the King to be pulled down first ! and men and women, one and all, are devoutly employed in the demolition.’ Hume, too, was present, looking on for the space of two years, and unwittingly taking part. But he too saw no handwriting on the wall. There is not a single passage

in a single letter, intimating any likelihood that their supper tables were to be overturned, and that other *tableaux* would become the fashion. Ten years afterwards indeed, he had taken a kind of alarm; but, as shortsighted in the nature of the danger, as of the means of meeting it. The French King, he thought, had ruined the state by recalling the Parliament; and Brienne was the only man in France to save it! Hume appears to have considered the decline of France to be a case of chronic deperition; while, of the ills of England—its national debt, its factions, its popular elections—some disgusted, and all alarmed him. He speaks of England as a country to fly from; while, to all appearance, France would have found him, in 1789, in confident repose. A good many French gentlemen were in London in the spring of 1768, and witnessed our election riots; most of them, as Hume believed, returned very happy that they were born under a government not liable to these inconveniences; ‘which,’ he adds, ‘is a fortunate way of thinking,’—so entirely did he agree with them. Notwithstanding his great sagacity in reasoning out the past, we see no proof of his having had a proportionate mastery over the probabilities of present politics; and nothing in him, therefore, of that statesman-like astrology by which the nativity of the future is often cast. The other great problem for the politicians of those times, was the probable issue of our differences with America. Here Hume was nearer right than Robertson. His want of confidence in Lord North having head enough for such great operations, or that a lukewarm coward like Gage, could retrieve in the field the deficiencies of the cabinet, were surer grounds to go upon, than his belief that the British Empire was in its decline. Besides, he was ‘an American on principle;’ objecting to distant colonies—being of opinion also, that, abstractedly, ‘a republican form of government is by far the best.’—One of its great advantages, in the eyes of Hume, over a mixed monarchy, consisting in the fact, that it would considerably abridge its liberty!

In the opinion which he formed of individuals, Hume appears to have been occasionally misled, to an extent which we should have thought impossible. We have mentioned his opinion of Brienne’s capacity for government: It is only on a par with the extravagance of his panegyrics upon Rousseau—continued up to the day they quarrelled. He tells Blair in December 1765, that Rousseau in many things very much resembles Socrates; only that the comparison in some particulars is to the advantage of his friend. (!) Next October, he writes to Smith: ‘He is a composition of whim, affectation, wickedness, vanity, and inquietude, with a very small, if any, ingredient of madness. These ruling qualities, together with ingratitude, ferocity, and lying, make

‘up the whole of his composition.’ Mistakes in character are sometimes dearly paid for. France paid for the mistake, which others made as well as Hume respecting Brienne, in the Revolution of 1790: a catastrophe which Brienne did as much to hasten, as any, the very worst of the experimental ministers, who passed along that tremulous stage before the curtain fell. No two persons, we suppose, so thoroughly unlike as Hume and Rousseau, ever thought before of setting up a friendship. They resembled each other in nothing, but in the belief that they had been both made martyrs, on account of the singularity of their opinions. The penalty of this preposterous alliance, Hume was obliged to pay himself. He felt severely, not only the European scandal of a breach between two such famous philosophers and friends; but the vexation also, of the only controversy, literary or personal, in which he ever descended as a principal into the public lists. He was wounded at so many points in this affray—though with no sin to answer for beyond a generous vanity in wishing to carry off the glory of being Rousseau’s keeper—that he esteemed his relations with this madman among the misfortunes of his life. In settling the elements of Rousseau’s character, Hume should have made more allowance, we think, for his madness: For a very little of that goes a long way, and the whole composition is penetrated and affected by it.

In less than two years, Lord Hertford removed from Paris to the viceroyalty of Ireland. Hume remained for a few months in charge of the Embassy; and the threads of one or two discussions of some consequence were left in his hands. They related to Dunkirk and Canada, and arose out of the peace of Paris. These creditably disposed of, he returned to London to give an account of his stewardship; to thank the King for his goodness; and to settle the celebrated Rousseau, who (he boasts) had rejected invitations from half the Princes of Europe, to put himself under his protection. A vision of the Irish Secretaryship under Lord Hertford had for a few weeks been floating before him. On mentioning this to Blair, he asks; ‘What does the Doctor (Robertson) say at present to these great folding-doors, opened to all the chimeras of ambition? Alas! they may be thrown open much wider, if possible; none of these chimeras will enter. Philosophy, with her severe brows, guards the passage; while Indolence, in affright, is ready to throw herself out at the window. Mr Hume recommends himself to Ferguson and Jardine, and John Adams and Mrs Adams, and to all the Poker,—and desires the prayers of the faithful for him on this occasion.’ He hated, from the bottom of his heart, the thought of Dublin as a residence. It

was moving out of light into darkness. And he did not much more fancy the duties of the office, either public or private. Yet, what the proverb says of towns and women who begin to parley, is equally true of men. He would have agreed to go, in spite of his better genius—and Lord Hertford would certainly have taken him—but for the timidity of Lord Rockingham, then minister; and for what Lord Hertford called the world—‘which would not have it so.’ With regard to Lord Hertford’s wishes, there can be no doubt, after a scene which took place at Paris before he resigned the Embassy. Hume thus describes it, writing home :—‘One day last spring, Lord Hertford came into my room, and told me that he had heard of many people who endeavoured by their caresses to persuade me that I ought to remain in France; but he hoped that I would embrace no scheme of life which would ever separate him and me. He now loved me as much as ever he esteemed me; and wished we might pass our lives together. He had resolved several times to have opened his breast so far to me; but, being a man of few words and no professions, he had still delayed it; and he now felt himself much relieved by this declaration of his desires and intentions.’ Nevertheless, after all, Lord Hertford was obliged to tell him that the scheme of the Irish Secretaryship must be given up. ‘He was not at liberty to indulge his inclinations in favour of one whose abilities and ease in business he had so long experienced.’ For he had been assured that, by naming him, (with the particular additional prejudices which prevailed at that moment against the Scotch,) he should condemn his own administration. Their friendship, however, was to be the same as ever. He should have the same wish to serve him; and, for any services he might render him, he asked for no other return than that he would pass with him all the time he could spare: since it would be a happiness to him to receive him in Dublin or any part of the world—‘let the prejudices and follies of mankind be what they will.’*

* Mr Croker either reads or writes so carelessly (perhaps both) that he should be a gentle critic on the mistakes of others. In a note to Boswell’s Johnson, he says—(Vol. I. 225,) ‘He has in his possession proof that when Lord Hertford (whose private Secretary in his embassy to Paris Hume had been) was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, his Lordship declined continuing him in the same character, alleging as a reason, the dissatisfaction that it would excite on account of Hume’s anti-religious principles.’ Now, Hume was at no time Lord Hertford’s private Secretary at Paris; nor was it, as his private Secretary, that Lord Hertford had been desirous of taking him with him to Dublin. But next, and principally, Lord Hertford did not decline appointing

Hume was perfectly satisfied with Lord Hertford's explanation: and could not look about him, indeed, without seeing the necessity. A little while before, a printer had been called before the House of Lords for publishing a letter from Wilkes, in which he had complained of the Scotch complexion of Lord Hertford's Embassy, and especially of Hume. It is possible that an additional objection against placing Hume in the front rank of the Irish government, might be his infidelity: though if this were so, the objection was a capricious one—or, some of the public men of that period have been grossly libelled. His being a Scotchman, was at that time sufficient of itself, to justify the head of an administration in giving way. Another manager, of a different company of performers, was under the like necessity of humouring his public. So afraid was Garrick of the prejudice which our unfortunate nation then lay under, that in 1769, on bringing out one of John Home's tragedies, he changed its name from *Rivine* (the heroine of one of Ossian's fragments) into that of the *Fatal Discovery*: And, 'in order more effectually to disguise its origin, procured 'a young English gentleman, a student from Oxford, to attend 'at the rehearsals and personate the author!' And Hume himself mentions in a letter that the play had escaped, by its author lying concealed. Facts like these were not likely to dispose him to take a more friendly view of the English people. Nor ought they. But with regard to his appointment to Ireland, he must have felt himself from the first equally unfitted for either leading the debates of an Irish House of Commons, or leading the potatoes of the Irish gentry out of it.

He was easily reconciled, therefore, to the exchange of the political importance of an Irish secretary, for the solid compensation of a pension of £400 a-year for life. Lord Hertford's further offer to make him Keeper of the Black Rod, (£900 a-year,) while a deputy was to do the duty at £300, he declined—'not as unjust, but as savouring of greediness.' There is no reason to believe that he ever at any time regretted that he had not gone to Ireland. Should he have ever done so, it must, we think, have been on recollecting, that, protected by distance, he would, in that case, have avoided his most trouble-

Hume Irish Secretary, but was overruled by others; at least this was certainly Lord Hertford's own account to Hume. We shall be sorry to find that Mr Croker has in his possession the proof which he supposes; for it is impossible to reconcile the two statements. Lord Hertford, the patron of Hume, has been hitherto believed to be a man of exemplary truth and virtue. There was, to be sure, another, and a very different Lord Hertford, with whom Mr Croker was better acquainted, we believe; but with whom, he must not confound him.

some and ludicrous misadventures with Rousseau. In the meantime, he is very merry at Boswell's gallanting Mademoiselle la Vasseur, Rousseau's housekeeper, to London. Boswell, it may be remembered, had told Hume that he was not clear that it was right in him to keep company with Hume himself! We wonder whether Johnson, who grumbled at Boswell for having made acquaintance, while abroad, with Rousseau and Wilkes, ever heard the lengths his friend had gone, in hunting down *célébrités*, on this last occasion. But Hume had no great cause for mirth. He was as ridiculously matched himself, and much more dangerously, when shepherding the lady's master. He must, at times, have thought it an odd fate, which united him to literary madmen—to have begun with Lord Annandale, and ended with Rousseau.

George III. began his reign, through necessity or policy, with short administrations. In the course of a few months, Lord Rockingham resigned, and the Burkes with him. General Conway, however, (much to the anger of the party,) continued Secretary of State; and he immediately replaced William Burke, his late Under Secretary, by Hume. He was necessarily well acquainted with his qualifications. He had not only his brother, Lord Hertford's, word for them; but, also, his own experience in the official correspondence which they had formerly carried on together. By his own account to Blair of his office life, Hume appears to have had a very easy time of it; only inclining to be dull. 'My way of life here is very uniform, and by no means disagreeable. I pass all the forenoon in the Secretary's house, from ten till three, where there arrive messengers that bring me all the secrets of the kingdom, and indeed of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. I am seldom hurried; but have leisure, at intervals, to take up a book, or write a private letter, or converse with any friend that may call on me; and from dinner to bed-time is all my own. If you add to this, that the person with whom I have the chief, if not the only transactions, is the most reasonable, equal-tempered, and gentlemanlike man imaginable, and Lady Aylesbury the same, you will certainly think I have no reason to complain—and I am far from complaining. I only shall not regret when my duty is over; because, to me, the situation can lead to nothing—at least in all probability; and reading and sauntering, and lounging and dosing, which I call thinking, is my supreme happiness—I mean my full contentment.' Two or three lines, in which he tells Sir Gilbert Elliot that he was 'continuing his parasitical practices—that is, dining at all the great tables that remained in London'—completed his present picture. Under these cir-

cumstances, the monthly, weekly, and almost daily reports, that his principal was going out, would not break his sleep. In little more than a twelvemonth the report came true; and Hume took it very quietly. He had trebled his income in the last three years, and was now worth nearly twelve hundred pounds a-year. With this, in 1768, he withdrew to Edinburgh—thinking it better suited to a studious independent turn even than London; and, on the whole, as good a place as any other for his remaining years.

He had been all along more of a Scotchman at heart, we suspect, than he was probably himself aware. At all events, Edinburgh was his natural home. There could be no place, where his presence would be felt to be so great an honour; none, where his society would give so much pleasure; none, where so many friendly faces would brighten round him, in sickness or old age. The tables, too, were now turned. The mob of gentlefolks, to whose neglect before he had been so weakly sensitive, would be curious enough to listen with their own ears to the favourite of princesses and ministers. His politics also were rising in favour. If he had been asked—from what quarter a cloud might again be creeping up to disturb him, there was probably none from which he would have less anticipated evil, than from his old metaphysics. Nevertheless, so it was. Subjects, which he had laid aside for twenty years, were now brought up against him; and he was attacked on them more bitterly and more effectively than at any former period. Beattie's *Essay on Truth* was published in 1770. The most distinguished of his former adversaries, Campbell and Reid for instance, had approached him with the utmost deference, even when they most differed from him. It was strange to him, therefore, to be singled out for attack anew, at his advanced age, and after his foreign triumphs: but, above all, to be attacked for the first time in a most offensive tone. Hume complained, accordingly, that he was not treated like a gentleman. Beattie's bad manners did not prevent him from being warmly patronised at Edinburgh by Dr John Gregory, and by the ungrateful Blacklock. Nevertheless, he had the prudence to perceive that Hume had still too many friends about him there, to make it safe to leave Aberdeen, and trust himself amongst them in a professor's chair. But Hume had few to fight a battle for him in London. There the *Essay on Truth* was still more warmly welcomed. It was received, indeed, as the long-delayed avenger of insulted Christianity. Johnson and Mrs Montagu (no longer friends) joined to do honour to its author. He was rewarded by a pension from the crown; and was presented by Reynolds with a portrait of himself. Reynolds introduced into the picture an attendant angel, who is represented driving downwards

three hideous allegorical figures ; two of which were supposed to be Voltaire and Hume. Sir William Forbes says, in the first volume of his *Life of Beattie*, that he has reason to believe that Reynolds had no such thought ; Yet he has printed in the second volume a letter from Reynolds himself to Beattie—from which it is very evident that, in this instance at least, Hume was not suspicious without fair cause. ‘ Mr Hume has heard from some-body, that he is introduced into the picture not much to his credit : there is only a figure, covering his face with his hands, which they may call Hume or any body else ; it is true it has a tolerably broad back. As for Voltaire, I intended he should be one of the group.’ The combative Johnson maintained, as a general proposition, that it was for an author’s good that he should be attacked. It drew a crowd. Hume, he said, had been the better for all previous antagonists. The *Essay on Truth* was an exception, only because the confutation was complete. Johnson thought that he had had a turn for metaphysics in his youth. We should doubt it. He was more in his true element, we suspect, when vindicating the manner than the matter of the *Essay*. To treat an adversary with respect, was, in Johnson’s opinion, giving him an advantage to which he was not entitled. It was striking soft in a battle. Besides, if Hume were the great man he thought himself, to attack him was throwing peas against a rock.

It was an untoward accident for Hume, that Warburton first, and Johnson afterwards, gave the law in letters so long to London. Johnson could never hear with temper the mention of Hume’s name. But when he put in a special protest against the unbelief of Hume, grounded on the supposition that Hume had acknowledged to a Durham clergyman, that he had never read the New Testament with attention,—we suspect that Hume might have, on equally good grounds, objected to any judgment by Johnson on his writings. He probably never read more of them than to pick out the materials for a criticism on his style. How uncertain are reputations ! Literary more perhaps than any other. Who can presume to say, what seed will grow ? For instance, how little could Johnson have anticipated the proportion between the readers of his most applauded writings, and the readers of Hume, by the year 1846 ! Above all, what would he think of the judgment, which the world has come to, between their styles ? The cumbrous and sonorous Latin of his own *Rambler*—‘ the long-resounding march’ which he thought he had added to the English language—is already buried under its multitude of words : while the most fastidious purist in style is yet led captive by the inimitable charms—often un-

grammatical and unidiomatic, but always clear, lively, and attractive—of the Scotchman civilised in France. Johnson was understood to know more of mere books than most of his contemporaries: but he seems to have had too great an abhorrence of the principles of Voltaire and Hume, to have learned even the dates of their respective writings. Otherwise he would never have said, that Hume was an echo of Voltaire; and that he would never have written history, if Voltaire had not written it before him. Hume began his History 1752, and published the first volume 1754. Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV.* was only published in 1752: and the first stolen and mutilated copy of his *Essai sur les Mœurs*, in 1754. If Johnson had said, that the historical light, which broke out in Scotland with so much splendour towards the middle of the last century, was to be tracked to Montesquieu, he would have been much nearer the truth. Whenever Johnson happened to agree with Hume in his principles, he either differed from him in their application, as in the argument on Miracles, and in basing morals on utility: or he would not allow him any merit for them, as in the case of Politics. Hume was a Tory, he said, by accident. We wonder what would have been the list of accidents, which Johnson would have named. Scepticism in religion could hardly have been one of them, in his case more than in that of Bolingbroke—notwithstanding precedents. Yet, there does appear to be a tendency in thoughtful minds, after taking off the restraints of religion from society, to reimpose them in another form. In his horror of that scepticism, Johnson would gladly have denied a happy life to sceptics, or a happy death. He grudged Hume his supposed tranquillity; and, undoubtedly, would have rejoiced to have seen him in the plantations, working at the same gang, to which he wished he could have sent Rousseau. It was all vanity and lying, if Hume affected not to dread annihilation. When the last hour itself should really come, it came in Johnson's bewildered imagination so terrible to all, that he made no distinction of persons. He appears to have been almost incapable of believing in or understanding a happy death. The triumphant deathbeds of the family of Wesley were quite as inconceivable to him, as the levity of Hume's last moments; and his playful admission of having no excuse to offer, for not getting with a good grace into Charon's boat.

Without being well acquainted with persons, it is not easy to gauge their state of mind at particular periods. The life of a company sometimes returns home to yawn or cry: others, who do not care at all for society—and for whom, therefore, society does not care—do not know what it is to be dull, when with their

children or their books. Others, again, you must not judge of by their letters. They have a foolish habit of scene-painting in words. Their autobiography, as transmitted by the post, is always coloured above or below the truth. How far, the last was at all the case with Hume, we cannot say. But, when the world was at its best with him, his letters do not describe his inner life—that life which a man really lives to himself and not to others—in very engaging terms. Writing to Baron Mure from Paris, where he was encircled by the great, the learned, and the ladies, and when he had only time to open a book which might be the subject of conversation, all he presumes to say of his fretful being is: ‘I am well enough pleased with this change of life; and a satiety of study had beforehand prepared the way for it. However, time runs off in one course of life as well as another, and all things appear so much alike, that I am afraid of falling into total stoicism and indifference about every thing.’ Among the instances he gives of his indifference, is the pending Secretaryship. What, if Mure and Elliot had compared letters? It would not be reasonable to expect that two years later, especially in a letter to Madame de Boufflers, he should make a more favourable report of London: ‘The best company are usually, and more so at present, in a flame of politics; the men of letters are few, and not very sociable; the women are not in general very conversible. Many a sigh escapes me for your sweet and amiable conversation; I paint you to myself all serenity, and cannot believe that ever I had the misfortune to displease you.’ This picture of himself to the same lady in 1772, and of his first Edinburgh friends, is still less flattering:—‘I have totally and finally retired from the world, with a resolution never more to appear on the scene in any shape. This purpose arose, not from discontent, but from satiety. What other project can a man of my age entertain? Happily, I found my taste for reading return, even with greater avidity, after a pretty long interruption; but I guard myself carefully from the temptation of ever writing any more; and though I have had great encouragement to continue my history, I am resolved never again to expose myself to the censure of such factious and passionate readers as this country abounds with. There are some people here conversible enough; their society, together with my books, fills up my time sufficiently, so as not to leave any vacancy; and I have lately added the amusement of building, which has given me some occupation. I have now no other object but to sit down and think; and die in peace.’ He did so; and died in peace, August 25, 1776.

It is only as a thinker and a writer, that men have for a long

time thought of Hume. But, his personal character throws light on his understanding; and the publication of his correspondence has, for the first time, put the public in possession of materials for forming an independent judgment of its own upon it. He is justly said to seem, in different parts of his writings, to have had two minds. We should be tempted to say the same of his character. 'He alone (observes Mackintosh, comparing him with Burke and Smith and Montesquieu) appears to have possessed the sort of intellectual versatility—the power of contracting the mental organs to the abstractions of speculative philosophy, or of dilating them for the large and complicated deliberations of business.' In his own time, his learning appears to have been almost equally looked up to by his friends. He was evidently a great reader. Since, although we find him saying in a pet that all good books are soon read, he has also testified that over reading was the only debauch of which he was ever guilty. On borrowing a Strabo for his essay on the *Populousness of Antient Nations*, he mentioned that he had read through almost every classical author, Greek and Latin, while collecting materials for that single paper. Hume's knowledge, however, was an affair of use, not ornament. His French was apparently little better than his Latin—while his Greek must have been, by his own showing, a good deal worse. His Latin had a noble contempt for prosody and syntax, which would have delighted Johnson, (whose masculine sense loved to disport in the amenities of modern Latin,) as much as it would have shocked Buchanan. Witness his metamorphosis of a line of Ovid—

Nam simul ac mea caluerant pectora Musæ!

He took only four books with him to Paris: they were Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, and Tasso. In an early letter to Hutcheson, he calls Horace one of the best moralists of antiquity. We should have expected, therefore, that he would have learned more of Horace's real character by this time, than to think that he would not have been tempted from his retreat at the age of fifty, to mingle among courtiers, or enter on the paths of ambition.

Of Hume's historical writings we have said enough, both in praise and censure. The leading characteristics of his metaphysics and of his morals have been necessarily brought under discussion again and again in this Journal. They are admirably examined also, the first by Dugald Stewart, the last by Mackintosh, in their Preliminary Dissertations to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Universal scepticism proves too much for any practical purpose whatsoever. When it has thrown out its speculations

‘for the entertainment of the learned and metaphysical world,’ not only do all subjects retain their ancient relative proportions, but the sceptic himself is found looking at life, and at every one of its realities, pretty much in the same way with other people. So said Hume of himself, his opinions, and his feelings, on his mother’s death. Sceptical reasonings, also, are of two kinds. Whether they regard the mysterious connexion of cause and effect, or the more palpable cases of an outer world or of existence itself, they may amount either to a denial of the possibility of any evidence on these questions—or only to a denial of some particular species of proof. All ages have probably produced sceptics of both sorts. Of those of the first sort who figured in the last age, we need only mention Foucher, Leibnitz’s correspondent, Arthur Collier, and Bishop Berkeley. Collier affirmed that he had demonstrated the utter impossibility of an external world. Even Turgot considered it to be impossible, that a man could have any turn for metaphysics, unless he had at some time doubted the existence of matter. Descartes appears to have only conceded the existence of an external world to the irresistible inclination of all men to believe in one. Hume has been usually understood to belong to the highest class of doubters: and, in a note, (F,) to his essay called *The Sceptic*, he defends that extreme doctrine against the consequences imputed to it. But in one of his letters, evidently a late one, he appears to have descended into the lower class; and to have questioned the mode of proof only, not the possibility. What he says of his reasonings concerning cause and effect, may be extended to his idealism; especially if we add to Descartes’s concession the doctrine of Leibnitz:—‘*Que la verité des choses sensibles ne consistait que dans la liaison des phénomènes, qui devait avoir sa raison; et que c’est ce qui les distingue des songes.*’ The letter in question belongs to that modification of Hume’s later views, to which Dugald Stewart has referred in his Preliminary Dissertation, (212.) Reid might, perhaps, have put it among the other evidence of his forgetting his metaphysics. It is an answer to an unknown correspondent: and expresses some displeasure at being misunderstood:—‘Allow me to tell you, that I never asserted so absurd a proposition as *that any thing might arise without a cause.* I only maintained that our certainty of the falsehood of that proposition proceeded neither from intuition nor demonstration, but from another source. That Cæsar existed—that there is such an island as Sicily—for these propositions, I affirm, we have no demonstrative nor intuitive proof—would you infer that I deny their *truth*, or even their certainty? There are many different kinds of certainty; and some of them as satisfactory to the mind, though

‘perhaps not so regular, as the demonstrative kind. Where a man of sense mistakes my meaning, I own I am angry; but it is only with myself, for having expressed my meaning so ill, as to have given occasion to the mistake.’ The world certainly had mistaken him. And under that mistake, the metaphysical schools of Europe have been chiefly occupied for nearly a century past, in supporting or opposing his opinions. If we are admitted to the benefit of other proofs; if, to the *nihil est in intellectu quod non erat in sensibus*, we may add the *nisi intellectus ipse*, we are restored to all the liberty which speculation can desire—since the *intellectus ipse* may comprehend either the ideas of Plato, or universal fixed conceptions and necessary truths, or only the humbler revelations of experience, and common sense. But it is as difficult, in the case of Hume as of Cicero, to be always sure of his real meaning. In the ‘Dialogues on Natural Religion,’ he supposes even his sceptic to be merely trying his strength by way of exercise. For Philo himself is represented as being at heart a believer in Natural Religion:—‘I must confess,’ he says, ‘that I am less cautious on the subject of Natural Religion than on any other; both because I know that I can never, on that head, corrupt the principles of any man of common sense; and because no one, I am confident, in whose eyes I appear a man of common sense, will ever mistake my intentions.’ With these opinions attributed to his sceptic, Montesquieu and Franklin would only have complained, (and justly,) that he had not drawn his line of argument broad enough and straight enough for ordinary readers.

We agree with Paley in wondering that Hume should have considered his Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, as incomparably the best of all his writings. Cicero (whose moral writings he professes to admire so much) would certainly never have adopted his theory, of utility being the sole and exclusive ground of all moral distinctions. We cannot even conceive that Hume is serious in asserting, that the notion of the will having any thing to do with morals, was a novelty brought in by theologians: And surely the merest theologian that ever dogmatized *ex cathedra*, can never have narrowed the notion of virtue more absurdly, than Hume has stretched it, when, according to his paradoxical account of virtue, to want a limb, a faculty, an affection, or a principle, are all equally moral wants! In this case, it is only by a strange abuse of language, and by a torpidity of moral nature quite as strange, that Hume can have supposed the source of moral approbation and disapprobation to be, nevertheless, derived from sentiment.

Hume’s talents appear to least advantage in his strictly literary

criticisms. There is a poverty about most of them, a want of sympathy with the higher order of genius, which makes them almost as flat and as discouraging as Kames's *Elements*. It belonged probably to his constitutional coldness; and is even more disagreeable than the anatomical composure which Hutcheson complained of in his treatment of morals. The rougher way in which Johnson stalks over the favourite haunts of imagination and poetry, trampling down their flowers, is perhaps more provoking, but, on the other hand, it is more amusing. Where either the nationality of Hume, or his friendliness, or his generous interest in obscure merit, were put in motion, there was an end of his judgment altogether. Mr Burton says, and truly, that no Scotsman could write a book of respectable talent, without calling forth Hume. 'Wilkie was to be the Homer, Blacklock the Pindar, and Home the Shakspeare, or something greater, of his country. On those who were his rivals in his own peculiar walks—Adam Smith, Robertson, Ferguson, and Henry, he heaped the same honest-hearted commendation. He urged them to write; he raised the spirit of literary ambition in their breasts; he found publishers for their works; and, when these were completed, he trumpeted the praises of the author through society.' Wilkie's *Epigoniad* was the second epic in the language: Home's *Douglas* the only tragedy. It was long before he could bring his scepticism to bear on the authenticity of Ossian. And this was not from being dazzled by the genius of Macpherson; who, in his opinion, had, 'of all men, the most anti-historical head in the universe.' But his national pride was captivated at first by the phenomenon of an Erse epic; and, afterwards, he was loath to expose the credulity of Blair, in whom the poet had got the better of the antiquary. It is curious to observe the several stages through which his convictions passed upon this subject; from his believing letter of 1760, to his doubting letters of 1763; ending at last in the scornful essay on the genuineness of Ossian's poems, which he left in MS. behind him.

During the middle ages, we all know how frequently the house of Douglas convulsed and divided Scotland. But nobody could have anticipated that it was reserved for it, in the present state of society, once more to agitate the country from one end to the other. Yet such was the fate of the *Douglas Cause*. Hume took a deep interest in the question, in common with all his countrymen. In siding against the legitimacy, he was probably influenced from the first by his friendship for Andrew Stuart. But all possible considerations heaped together, and fired into a blaze, are necessary to account for the eagerness with which he watched its progress, and for the passion he threw

"into it. 'Idiots,' is as mild a word as he can find for Judges, in whose opinions Lord Mansfield afterwards, and the House of Lords concurred.

The *conspectus* of a life, such as is contained in the correspondence collected in these volumes, ought to afford the means of a decisive judgment on the character of the individual; yet, there is one point on which we hesitate in the present instance—the conclusion which we should draw regarding it, is so much at variance with the character which Hume has attributed to himself, and which his contemporaries appear to have all agreed in giving him. But certainly, if we were to disregard the testimony, and to judge only from the revelations of himself contained in this correspondence, we should be obliged to say, that we miss in him the philosophical spectator of human life: we miss the quality of temper and serenity of mind—the superiority to trifles, the steady love for others, and unflinching confidence in their love for him—among the calm yet earnest qualities which we had made sure of finding. Some of his best and oldest friends slip through his fingers; he merely relaxes his hand and lets them fall. Oswald seemingly had taken pet about a dinner scene, where Hume had affronted his Bishop-brother, by jesting about being made an Irish Bishop himself—a sore subject in those days. Hume drops him without an effort. He afterwards writes about Lord Kames, his old friend, in an estranged and scoffing tone. We have seen, for what a trifle (we should rather say, for what an act of kindness) he was ready to cast off Mure. Among these letters, there is a still stranger outbreak against Lord Elibank, for differing with him on the character of Queen Mary! That quarrel, however, was got over, as well as that with Mure; and Lord Elibank, we were glad to see, was one of the small dinner party, which he bespoke to be ready for him on his return from Bath, before embarking in Charon's boat.

Hume began life by looking at human nature as a heathen would have looked at it; taking his notion of virtue, he says, out of 'Cicero's Offices,' rather than from the 'Whole Duty of Man.' Those who are of opinion that there can be no morality except what is based on Christianity, or perhaps on some one favourite form of it, will have already passed sentence upon Hume. But some may be found, who are content to judge of him after his own views and principles. Such persons will look at the whole case; and will hear witnesses to character. There is the abounding testimony of Adam Smith, never doubted except in its excess. There is the friendship of Robertson and Blair; and of the most eminent Clergy of a religious city—difficult to be maintained for years, under any circum-

stances—impossible, unless the character and conduct of Hume had been above fear and above reproach. But more, there are unconditional admissions from neutral, not to say hostile parties—from Lord Lyttleton, the friend, and Sir William Forbes, the biographer, of Beattie; from Boswell also, toad-eater to Johnson—admiring or despising, as his deity gave the nod. Lord Lyttleton expressly notices the probity and candour of Hume, and the humanity of his manners. Forbes and Boswell speak, of their own knowledge, to a higher humanity, (worth all the manners in the world,)—his charity to the poor. On the other hand, we have had occasion to mention sundry particulars injurious to him as an historian; and some of them were moral defects, or on the very verge of being so. In speaking of them, we have spoken our mind freely.

There remains only one further point to mention. We do it with pain. But the transaction was an act of moral delinquency on the part of Hume, so fatal to all obligations and to all trust, that some charitable forbearance, we think, is necessary to reconcile it with his other virtues. It is a warning to all men against that indulgent and relaxed morality, to which the most loveable dispositions, by their calm and gentle natures, are most exposed. Hume discriminates in his writings between moral principles and speculative opinions. Errors or excesses in religion, he says, are not to be imputed as a fault; till they get possession of the heart, and alter the boundaries of vice and virtue. But, alas! irreligion, too, has its monks, its fanaticism, and its pious frauds, as well as religion: And we think it but too plain that the irreligious spirit of Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon, had fatally confounded their sentiments of morality, wherever religion or the clergy were concerned. For instance, late in life Hume was consulted by Colonel Edmonstone, whether a young man, who did not believe in the Thirty-nine Articles, and who had no inclination for the Church, should go into orders. He advised in this case as, we feel assured, he would not have advised in any other. We are ashamed to print his answer. It amounts to *Fiat sacrificulus, et pagum decipiat; populus vult decipi—decipiatur*. 'It is putting' (answers the false oracle) 'too great a respect on the vulgar and on their superstitions, to pique one's self on sincerity with regard to them. Did ever one make it a point of honour to speak truth to children or mad-men? If the thing were worthy being treated gravely, I should tell him that the Pythian oracle, with the approbation of Xenophon, advised every one to worship the gods—*νομῶ πολέως*. I wish it were still in my power to be a hypocrite in this particular. The common duties of society usually require it:

‘and the ecclesiastical profession only adds a little more to
 ‘an innocent dissimulation, or rather simulation—without which
 ‘it is impossible to pass through the world.’

The letter to his publisher, (1755,) endeavouring to persuade him by the precedent of Bolingbroke, that a few strokes of irreligion might rather promote the sale of his books than hurt it, looked awkward. We cannot wonder that Dr Brown attacked him on it, however it might be capable of being explained. But after advising a young man to compromise himself for life, by one of the most irreparable and irrevocable of all measures, he could no longer have rested his defence against any imputation upon his conduct, by an appeal to his unquestionable veracity. The time was over, for talking any more about that low fellow Warburton and his gang, and their finding it a difficult matter to persuade the public that he did not speak his sentiments, on any subject which he handled, or that he had any view to any interest whatever.

We hope that Hume had, on the whole, a happy life. But it was too abstracted a one; and too remote from the ordinary holds and moorings, necessary for the understanding as well as the heart of man. He had rudely cut the thread of many sympathies; and had refined away the obligation of many duties. In so doing he must at the same time have loosened even his own confidence in many of the more familiar virtues of domestic life. While he acknowledged to himself a proneness to suspect the attachment of his friends, he had not collected around him, in a family of his own, the affections which can never be questioned, and the interests which can never fail. He would have been happier, we think, if the severity of his Code of Morals had been a little raised—and if he had lifted himself up by looking to a higher nature! There was of old a legendary figure of Christ, which was said to have a power of growth in it, so as to be always taller than the tallest man. The companion to this figure, and also converse to it, would be the man, who, erect in himself and noble, yet, from looking upwards, becomes nobler still!

Hume’s character, we confess, has not the elevation we desire. As, in his writings, we wish that they had a little more of the God in them—so we want a higher inspiration in his moral nature. His happy constitution might be less in want of religion, than many others. But he would, in all senses, have been the better for a little; and happier too. Knowing from Pope what is meant by aruling passion, it is a poor thing to set it on the die of literary fame. In one way, he made the most of it; for his prescience of his growing reputation certainly soothed him in his last illness. This was something; but it is surely singular. Delusion for delusion,

the *manes fabulaque* of another world, are at least an improvement on the after-life of posthumous renown! Immortality on earth, fades away before the light of immortality in a future state. On the other hand, what is to be said, but 'vanity of vanities!' when a philosopher who has no expectation of a future state, and who is contemplating annihilation with complacency, is found, notwithstanding this, busied on his deathbed about his posthumous fame?—Careful what men may be saying of his Essays and his Histories, after he himself is sleeping in the grave, where all things are forgotten!

Hume had chosen literature for his profession. He always maintained its honour. He might, perhaps, be too sensitive to its pretensions; knowing how much they were his own. But when he was poorest, he never courted the great. After he had passed into public life, he checked Horace Walpole, with equal spirit and dignity, for speaking slightly of men of letters. They formed the principal difference, in his opinion, between one age and another. He had sense enough, however, of its peril—from the narrow escape which he had had himself—to warn Gilbert Stuart against depending on literature alone. Notwithstanding his French predilections, he consulted the literary glory of England, and Gibbon's also, in advising him to lay aside his Swiss-French, and (1767) write in English, as the growing language. Hume then was true, we think, to the interests of literature. But still, to place his moral nature even here, as high as Adam Smith has placed it—as high 'as the frailty of human nature will permit'—he ought to have been awake to a more *moral* feeling of the greatness of its calling. He should have been more the servant of posterity, and less the slave of fame. There are noble words of Bacon, by which any man of letters may determine what his love of literature will be good for, in the eyes of God. 'The greatest error of all the rest, is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or farthest end of knowledge: For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity, and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession;—but seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason to the benefit and use of men: As if there were sought in knowledge, a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terras for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit

‘ or sale ;—and not a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man’s estate !’

Mr Burton, we think, will excuse us for having given our attention to his hero, rather than to himself. But it would be ungrateful, as well as unjust, if we were now to lay aside his interesting volumes without bearing testimony to the conscientious, judicious, and courageous manner in which he has performed the duties of an Editor; and to the useful assistance he has given to the reader, in the way both of suggestion and direct information, without once offending, either by over-admiration of his author, or over-anxiety to attract notice to himself.

ART. II.—*Les Rues de Paris : Paris Ancien et Moderne. Ouvrage rédigé par l'élite de la Littérature Contemporaine, sous la direction de LOUIS LURINE.* 2 vols. 8vo. Paris: 1844.

NO city has been so fortunate in its special historians as Paris. It is a consequence of the intense love which Frenchmen have towards their great capital, that writers above the ordinary stamp have taken a pleasure in dwelling on those details of its annals which are generally left to dry and laborious topographers. Paris has passed from the hands of Corrozet, Dom Brice, Sauval, and the rest of her old-fashioned Chroniclers, into those of authors who have illustrated her monumental history and actual life, with wit, feeling, and philosophy. Saint Foix is respectable, and sometimes amusing. Mercier, in his two *Tableaux de Paris*, has given a specimen of a singular thinker, not without genius, though strangely deficient in style; and whose pages rivet the reader’s attention in spite of himself, unpleasing as both matter and manner often are. Dulaure, no doubt, owed most of his popularity to mere vulgar Jacobinism; yet he, too, is readable, though abundantly superficial. In our own times, Charles Nodier employed his light and elegant pen on sketches of Parisian topography; and the two volumes before us contain the contributions of some thirty or forty writers, several of them distinguished, which form a kind of History of Paris by streets, illustrated with woodcuts in the modern style. The work is a bookseller’s speculation, and somewhat carelessly got up,—abounding in that diffusion and repetition which its method of composition ensures; yet there is much of talent scattered

over its pages, which are full of interest to uncritical readers, and especially to those who have a fondness for the memorable scenes and streets of the great continental metropolis.

It is not, however, to be expected, that French writers of the modern school, disciples of Victor Hugo, and worshippers of 'Notre-Dame de Paris,' should approach the 'middle-age' part of their subject without drawing amply at second-hand from the stores of a master, whose own inspiration was second-hand at best. Victor Hugo himself, we are bound to confess it, fond as we are of antiquarianism almost in every shape, failed altogether, to our thinking, in overcoming the barrier which existed between the mind of the age he was endeavouring to portray, and his own. His heroine is to us a mere Mignon without poetical soul—his priest and his captain are mere personages of the Ann Radcliffe school, dressed up in ill-fitting costumes of the fifteenth century—and his only real force is expended on Quasimodo, a creation of some imaginative power, but of the lowest and most material order. But of his followers, one and all, we are forced to say, that their productions leave scarcely any impression on the mind except that of the laborious and undigested cramming which they must have undergone to compose them. We ought to except Paul Lacroix, a writer with antiquarian lore enough to eclipse Walter Scott himself, who, after all, was chiefly distinguished by his extraordinary faculty for realising and assimilating knowledge not very extensive or complete; but then all Lacroix's learning poorly compensates his utter want of imagination, and gross sins against good taste. One and all, they force us back on our unavailing regret for the loss of the truly great master whose genius created this style of composition;—too superficial, too common-place, it is now the fashion to say, for these days, when all thought must be profound, and all feeling intense: but how strongly true, how touching, how natural, we only know when we have toiled through the volumes of dreary exaggeration which his successors inflict upon us.

One reason for this want of success may be, that the French have long and thoroughly divorced themselves from the middle ages, and broken off all connexion with the distant past. They have to learn its language now, like one of the classical tongues. They have little or none of the lingering feudalism of England and Germany, or the lingering mediæval religion of Spain and Italy. To them the pages of Froissart are no more living records than those of Thucydides. Now, the very same peculiarities of mental constitution which make Frenchmen such indifferent travellers—which render them so home-keeping by nature, so indisposed to extensive locomotion, so ill at ease when compelled to

it, so thoroughly French, whether encountered on the Ganges or the Plata, at Otaheite or on the borders of the Sahara—seem to disqualify them in a similar manner for that kind of intellectual expatriation which is requisite to the historical novelist. They travel on the surface of the past only; they rarely penetrate into its being; their souls are with the present, just as the inner man of the wandering Parisian is ever clinging to the Quais and the Boulevards. It is the condition of their existence. The very faculties which exist in their utmost perfection in France alone, are cramped and distorted when used in the unnatural labour. No one can tell a story so well as a Frenchman: no stories are so utterly dull and pointless as those of French historical romances. The very same author who could thrill the inmost heart with the simple adventures of a peasant and a grisette, or a dandy and a 'lioness,' is paralysed when his puppets are termed a knight and a châtelaine. He can only put them through a series of stiff, artificial jerks, instead of graceful motions; and make them compensate for the wretched dulness of the rest of their performance, by sinning and dying in some violent and unnatural attitudes.

Moreover—which is more immediately to our present purpose—though France be the native country of feudalism and chivalry, yet the Paris of the middle ages is not a very interesting city to the imagination. It wants a distinct historical character. It has no monuments of splendid civic aristocracies, like those of Italy; nor of the higher order of burgher-life and independence, like the cities of the Netherlands; no sacred corner, like Westminster, with its overpowering tide of national recollections. It scarcely showed any signs of the turbulent freedom of the old Communes, except once, in the ferocious period of the Burgundian and Armagnac massacres—unless we are to add the time of the League, with its coarse and sanguinary fanaticism. For a city of such antiquity and importance, moreover, it is remarkable how little Paris has, or ever had, to show of the architectural splendour of the ages in question. Except the Sainte Chapelle, no first-rate specimen of ecclesiastical architecture, as far as we are aware, ever existed at Paris; none, at least, of Parisian origin and character. Notre-Dame is a poor specimen of the art of the glorious fourteenth century. The absence of steeples and pinnacles in the distant view of Paris—the peculiar feature of most old northern cities—is very noticeable; nor were they ever much more numerous than at present. Nor are we believers in the tales which Parisian antiquaries very pardonably credit, of the ancient splendour and wealth of their capital. We have no faith in the 275,000

inhabitants whom Dureau de la Malle crowds within its narrow circuit in the reign of Philip le Bel: and scarcely believe in the 40,000 well-armed soldiers whom it turned out, if we may credit Monstrelet, in the middle of the famines and miseries of the fifteenth century. Compared with other famous towns of Europe, for the seven long centuries after Charlemagne, we believe it to have been a poor and gloomy city; not incorrectly represented, perhaps, by such wretched outskirts as the Faubourg Saint Marcel in later times, by which Candide entered Paris, and 'thought himself 'in the most miserable village of Westphalia;' which banished all Alfieri's illusions, and seems to have left so indelible a first-impression on the wayward Italian, that he could notice nothing in the French capital but the poverty of the public buildings, and the *bruttissime fucchie delle donne*. Its slow and often-interrupted improvements seem to have been generally the results of royal command, ill obeyed—rarely of civic or national spirit. There was no pavement until the royal stomach of Philip Augustus was turned, as he looked out of his window in the Cité, by the odours proceeding from a waggon ploughing up the mud of the streets; and the mandate which issued thereupon must have been slowly executed, for years elapsed before the perambulation of the streets by pigs was forbidden, when a son of Louis le Gros had been thrown from his horse by one of these untoward animals. Things, moreover, must soon have fallen back to their ancient condition; for the modern pavement of the Cité is said to be six feet above the level of that of Philip Augustus. From Philip le Bel, who built the first quay, down to Napoleon, who completed the double line within which the waters of the Seine are imprisoned, the Chroniclers scarcely mention one popular name, among the long series of monarchs, to whom Paris owes these indispensable constructions.

We are conscious of only one exception to the generally unattractive character of the annals of ancient Paris: it is to be found in the history of its venerable University,—rich in strange events as well as striking characters. The University was a nation of itself, with all the spirit and independence of a nation: it was the great corporation of learning and instruction; and, by whatever names its existence has been preserved, however great the changes in the subject-matter of its employment, it remains the same nation still. The Priesthood of learning was and is a caste apart—the only surviving caste of modern days. More or less influencing the world around, more or less elevated and prosperous, it has ever been true, in the main, to its vocation—ever proud and self-dependent. The ancient University,

the Sorbonne—nay, the Jesuit colleges, often remodelled and interfered with, never were the slaves of Kings or Popes, but sometimes their masters. And it so happens that the venerable quarter of the Pays Latin, still peopled by students, retains at the present day more of tradition, more perhaps of substantial antiquity, than all the rest put together. You may see at the Collège de Dainville, the very window—or that which has passed for centuries as such—from which the body of Peter Ramus, murdered for denying the infallibility of the Pope and Aristotle, was thrown on the pavement below. Hard by stands the old Collège des Cholets, where Buridan, that sage of equivocal reputation, rescued from his sack and the Seine, maintained for a whole day the thesis that it was lawful to slay a Queen of France. The neighbourhood of the Sorbonne contains the Collège or Hotel de Cluny; not historically celebrated, but the most beautiful specimen of Gothic art extant in Paris. It was utterly unknown and neglected for ages. Dom Germain Brice only remarks of it, 'that it is remarkable for nothing but its solidity; and such is the arrangement of its rooms, that great alterations must be made if it was necessary to render it suitable for the modern fashions;' and of the neighbouring chapel, he adds, that, 'Gothic as it is, it produces a certain recreation, by disposing the eyes to remark the difference between the gross and rustic style of building of past ages, and the correct and studied manner of these latter times.' David had his studio close by the Hotel de Cluny—and never caught one breath of its inspiration to correct his proud classical coldness. It is now preserved with the utmost care, as a museum of *moyen-age* antiquities: every grotesque ornament is worth its weight in silver; yet it may be doubted whether, in this tide of fashion, the old hostel is much more really appreciated than it was by Brice and David.

But if the earlier history of Paris is thus comparatively scanty in topics of interest, the era which commences with the revival of letters makes abundant compensation by the wealth of its recollections. Paris is emphatically the city of light, intelligence, society, and refined life; and its historian begins to breathe his proper atmosphere, as soon as he has issued from the gloomy and stifling air of the middle ages. Then the great city began to expand her arms, and embrace the spacious demesnes, royal and noble, which had hitherto lain idle without her gates. Then the edifices erected within those demesnes began to change their character; and instead of her castles of the olden time—the heaviest of all castles, with their cylindrical towers and extinguisher roofs—arose all the diversified splendour of the *Renaissance*. The sixteenth century, of which we have scarcely

any memorials left in London, is the date of many of the most remarkable buildings of Paris; the Tuileries, part of the Louvre, the Hotel de Ville, and many churches and still surviving hotels. Others, of greater magnificence, have passed away;—such as the Hotel de la Reine, built by Catherine de Medicis, on the site of which the present Halle aux Blés stands, perhaps the finest private building of its age: its elegant tower alone remains. The sixteenth century began by emancipating Kings and their dwellings from the constraint of feudalism: and was, at least in Northern Europe, peculiarly the era of palaces and courts. It ended by achieving a greater work, and laying the foundations of modern domestic society;—the great embellishment of life, and highest of its cultivated pleasures. And as France was the first in the career of social refinement, and set the example to all other nations in this department of civilization, so the history of Paris becomes of universal interest, as soon as the age of Modern Society opens, at the conclusion of the wars of religion, and reign of Henry the Fourth.

If the reader would obtain a view of the spot which may almost be called the cradle of social civilization—if he would at a single glance realize, to a certain extent, the external world of that delightful era of chivalry and literature, wit, buffoonery, extravagance, and imagination, which is portrayed in the French Memoirs of the seventeenth century—he should travel in a direction in which, probably, not one in a thousand of our countrymen in Paris ever bends his steps, and, leaving the squalid bustle of the Rue Saint Antoine, turn by a narrow street into the Place Royale. The aspect of its solemn old houses—so stately and gentlemanlike in their decay, so well preserved in their exterior, their silent rows so strangely contrasting with the busy and dirty region in their vicinity—will strike forcibly the imagination, even of one unacquainted with their history. They seem like palaces abandoned for a season, not tenantless—waiting for the return of their noble and courtly owners, gone on a far journey. But much more powerfully will it affect the visitor, if he knows even superficially the history of the spot; and is aware that the first existence of fashionable city life—of society such as he sees it among the better classes of any capital in Europe—may be traced back to those now deserted habitations. This is the light in which they have been viewed by Jules Janin, in his contribution to the work before us; for, allowing for the flutter and affectation of style which belongs to the Prince of *Feuilletonists*, there is both feeling and truth in his description.

‘Believe me, even to the lightest, and, apparently, most frivolous

dispositions, it is a melancholy task to search under these cold ashes for the few sparks which they still cover: it is a melancholy task, after the lapse of two generations so full of life—the life of wit, grace, genius, beauty, and courage—to pass over the same spot, now abandoned to nameless old men, to children, to invalids—to every thing which is silence, oblivion, repose. When you walk on these sounding flagstones, the noise of your steps terrifies you, and you turn round your head to see if some one of the heroes of old days is not following you—La Trémonille, Lavardin, Condé, Lauzun, Benserade. In the midst of this darkness and silence, you ask yourself, why have not the people of M. de la Rochefoucauld, of Gabrielle d'Estrées, and Madame de Montespan, lighted their torches to show the way to the carriage or the sedan of their mistress? Hush! from whence came that sound of music and *petits violons*? It came from the Rue du Parc; and this crowd of eager-looking citizens, whither are they going? They are following the invitation of their friend Molière; they are hastening to the Comedy, the new source of excitement which attracts them: they are bound for the Hotel Carnavalet, where *Georges Dandin* is acted to-night. And all the great hotels which I see here, of which the gates are closed and silent—and all these lofty windows, where no one shows himself except some servant-girl in rags—how were they called heretofore? These were the Hotel Sully, the Hotel Videix, the Hotel d'Aligre, the Hotel de Rohan, the Hotel Rotrou, the Hotel Gueménée—noble dwellings turned into ill-furnished lodgings, against which the cobbler of the corner, and the public scribe, have reared their squalid stalls! What may these aristocratic walls think of seeing themselves thus decayed, silent, disdained! What stillness in these saloons, once so animated with powerful conversation! What sadness on these gilt ceilings, all charged with loves and with emblems! What incessant change—what ultimate wretchedness! And does it not need some courage, once more be it said, to trace out all the remembrances of this fair spot, in which lived, and thought aloud, the rarest wits, the noblest geniuses, the most delightful satirists, the most excellent characters of that singular age which preceded so closely, as if to foreshadow it, all the French seventeenth century; great names before which every one bows with reverence; illustrious frequenters of the Place Royale, and component parts of its history. Nevertheless, this evocation of old times is thus far useful, that it may help to console us for the oblivion and silence which threatens us in turn. When we think of how few years the glory, and renown, and popularity of this world are composed, we end by troubling ourselves a little less about them.*—(Vol. i. p. 58.)

* M. Janin, in his brilliant but careless way, seems to place the Hotel Rambouillet in the Place Royale, which was not the case. There were two hotels of that name. The original town-house of the family was pulled down in 1629; it formed part of the site of the Palais Cardinal, (Palais Royal.) The mansion of 'Arthénice,' the rendezvous of Parisian literature and fashion, was originally called the Hotel Pisani, having

This famous Place Royale occupies the site of the ominous Hotel des Tournelles, built, or rebuilt, by an Englishman, the regent-Duke of Bedford, when the English counted on the permanence of their dominion in France—the scene of the splendour and the crimes of the house of Valois—the site of the tournament where Henry II. received his mortal wound—pulled down, in consequence it is said of superstitious terrors, by his son Charles IX. The Place Royale was built by Henry IV., and its style of architecture served as the model of our own Covent-Garden, as well as many other civic constructions of the same age. Fashion soon selected its magnificent hotels for her residence; from which it has now departed for many generations. We can remember, however, the residence of an ex-minister in the Place Royale under the Restoration: how long this solitary memorial of past grandeur has ceased, we do not know.

Under the reign of Louis XIII., however, this silent square was the centre of the best society of Paris, and of the world. It is scarcely too much to say, that the distinguishing tone of modern civilisation had its origin in that circle which assembled first round Madame de Rambouillet, and her daughter Madame de Montausier, and of which Madame de Sévigné was afterwards the life and ornament. Justice has lately been done in the pages of this Journal to the memory of the Hotel Rambouillet; but the historian of Paris can scarcely pass it by without devoting a few words to the subject, and to the influence which that circle had on the social life of its generation and the next.

Cardinal Richelieu, take him for all in all, was perhaps the ablest, if not the greatest of Frenchmen (for Napoleon, it must be recollected, was not a Frenchman by birth); and he was the most essentially French. Capable of the greatest schemes of statesmanlike ambition, the smallest personal interest or personal pique lay ever more closely at his heart. Even while planning his vast combinations of foreign and domestic policy, the bulk of his time and thought seems to have been occupied with cares of the most

belonged to the Marchioness's family. It was situated Rue St Thomas du Louvre, No. 15. The curious reader may consult a note of the Baron de Walckenaer, in his *Mémoires sur Madame de Sévigné*, in which this matter is thoroughly sifted. To the list of hotels eminent in the annals of Parisian society, which were situated in or near the Place Royale, may be added the house of the fair Marion de l'Orme, with its interior decorated by Solomon de Caus, who, as his countrymen say, communicated the discovery of the steam-engine to the Marquis of Worcester. Cardinal Richelieu lived at No. 21.

trifling description : with amorous and literary enterprises, having nothing but the gratification of vanity for their object : with elaborate devices of mystification and buffoonery, childish rivalries, womanish intrigues, and the tricks of a malicious monkey. He had none of the sympathies, few of the prejudices, of his age. Neither sacred things, nor consecrated impostures, had any empire over him. King, Pope, and Parliament, were to him mere names, representing pieces in the game of politics. Yet the same man was the slave of the paltriest impulses, when his conceit or egotism was piqued. If we read of him one day as guiding the sword of Gustavus, stemming the Romish reaction, founding the short-lived absolute monarchy of France ; the next day, he figures as on a level with poor Dr Goldsmith, when he wanted to exhibit his agility in jumping over a stick against a showman's puppet. This is no idle comparison. Brienne has recorded how Mary of Medicis, making sport of her clerical lover, then Bishop of Luçon, persuaded him, by adroit reflections on his skill, to execute a new saraband in her royal boudoir, with castanets in his hands, and in the costume of an Andalusian majo—amidst the suppressed convulsions of laughter of certain spectators posted behind the arras—laughter which Richelieu, when he discovered the trick, never forgot or forgave to his dying day. On the one hand, father Joseph, the masked politician, the secret councillor of all the deepest plans of Richelieu's ambition ; on the other, Bois Robert, the unfrocked atheist and buffoon—these are the contrasted figures with which that of Richelieu seems inseparably connected. On the whole, great as he was, there is something fundamentally odious in his character, which makes him one of the most uninteresting great men of history. Like Voltaire, whom he so strikingly resembled in many points of character, he was spiteful, hard-hearted, and cruel. He hated the Queen, who had rejected his impudent suit. He hated all whom she favoured. His political victims were not many, but they were hunted out with peculiarly cold and careful cruelty. He could be generous towards those who had committed offences against him : there is a striking story told by Tallemant des Réaux, who may be believed when he speaks well of any one, of his conduct towards a thievish secretary ; but he could not forgive an insult, a jeer, or the slightest mortification to his vanity, or opposition to his projects. His death was felt by France like the relief from a nightmare—from the king to the lowest rhymester of the *ruelles*, all joined in the burden of the couplets which proclaimed it—

‘ Il est parti, il a plié bagage,
Ce cardinal ! ’

But it is remarkable that a man so hateful, so destitute of all faith and all loftiness of purpose, should have left such durable impressions on the world. Scarcely does Paris itself, which is full of his relics—the Palais Royal, the Library, the Street which bears his name—speak more plainly of Richelieu, than that fabric of modern European policy, of which he has, scarcely with exaggeration, been termed the founder.

But while Richelieu broke down the feudal power of the nobles on the one hand, his jealous rule prevented the formation of any brilliant court on the other. Nor was the character of Louis XIII. suited to render him the centre of a sparkling circle, or the leader of the fashion of his kingdom. These circumstances, together with the eager appetite which began to be felt for the new delights of taste and literature, contributed to the formation, for the first and only time in French history, of what may be termed an independent society. For the first and only time, men breathed and moved in circles of their own, and had scope to form their tastes, and exercise their understandings, unfettered by prevailing influences from without. The short interval between the establishment of Richelieu's power and the wars of the Fronde—especially the latter part of it, the '*tems de la bonne Régence, tems où règnait une heureuse abondance,*' commemorated with tender recollection by St Evremond in his old age—was the period when France entered on a career which, continued, would have placed her in substance as well as in seeming at the head of European civilization. It was an age of bold and independent aspirations; of chivalry, refined by the polish of literature; of literature, as yet vivified in some degree by the unexpired genius of chivalry. Pedantry there might be, but it was almost of a graceful cast, before it had been touched and stiffened by the chilling breath of sarcasm; originality of demeanour, as well as opinion, was still tolerated, and added to the entertainment of the most polished circles. Jesuitism had not yet begun to recover its lost ground; thought was therefore freely interchanged on the highest subjects; and while there was a strong and earnest feeling of religion in the better class of society, it was unusually exempt from the miserable jealousies of fashionable orthodoxy. Corneille, Bossuet, Pascal, were all at home in companies like these, where the playful conversation of the hour alternated—(nor was the mixture thought affected or pedantic)—with disquisitions on ecclesiastical history, and arguments on the immortality of the soul.

We have no doubt advanced beyond the simplicity of those days. We have found out the ridiculous side of learning, seriousness, chivalry, enthusiasm of every kind; and ridicule is a quiet, irresist-

ible master of the ceremonies, who noiselessly removes all such unsuitable guests from the conversational circle. But, after all, the philosophy of society, like other branches of practical philosophy, aims at something higher than is ever realised. That the ordinary converse of fashionable drawing-rooms might be made conducive to the high interests of man, and progress of his race; that the sexes might meet on equal terms in the field of grave discussion carried on side by side with gossip and raillery—these were the dreams of a youthful and adventurous age, like the art of flying and the universal language. We know better now; and, amidst all the revivals of old fashions on which modern taste makes experiments, the least likely to be attempted is that of the Hotel Rambouillet.

We scarcely need observe, that our description applies only to a small and exclusive, though influential, section of the society of the seventeenth century at Paris. What was there a graceful freedom, degenerated elsewhere into the most eccentric license; and the evil times, unhappily, prevented the seed sown in the best of these reunions from coming to maturity. The last and most brilliant epoch of the Hotel Rambouillet, as Sainte Neuve remarks, was from the death of Richelieu to the Fronde, (1642-1648.) The anarchy of the Fronde was the legitimate successor of the freedom of the years immediately preceding. Ordinary history shows only the half romantic and half ludicrous incidents of that period,—the caprices of the lady leaders of armed parties, the valour of Condé, the genius of De Retz, and the real vanity and nothingness of the actors, one and all; except Turenne and Mazarin, who came forward turn by turn in the childish struggle. But the Memoirs of the times, while chiefly occupied by these frivolous details, give nevertheless occasional glimpses of the misery and general demoralization produced by this and the long Spanish wars which immediately followed it. Not that Paris suffered. On the contrary, her society was more brilliant than ever. Not only was the great city the headquarters of the war during great part of the struggle of the princes, who commanded a much more brilliant following than the crown; but it became the refuge of all those who were driven from the provinces by the license of hostilities. It was crowded by the highest clergy—Louis XIV. found thirty Bishops in Paris, at one of his earlier levees, a rare sight in a Catholic country—by the provincial noblesse, by all the classes who had any thing left to spend. The hazards of war, the dangerous and painful realities of the day, had the effect so often witnessed in times of revolution—they stripped life of its romance. The more refined spirits gradually deserted Stoicism for Epicureanism,

romance for farce;—always the prevailing taste in periods of civil war, when ‘let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,’ becomes a practical motto. This was the moment of Scarron and burlesque. The reunions of the Hotel Rambouillet were at an end. The Marquis and Marchioness were dead; the Princess Julie married to the Due de Montausier, who was engaged in levying war for the crown, and only returned to Paris to become a suitor for court employment, like so many others ruined by the troubles. It was in the salons of the Countess de Suze, Mademoiselle Scudéry, and a few other ladies of fantastic wits, that the old Rambouillet fashions were maintained, exaggerated, and rendered ludicrous; and there, and not in the circle of Arthénice, Molière picked up the models for his play of the *Précieuses Ridicules*; which did not, as critics are in the habit of asserting, demolish a triumphant fashion by its ‘unpitying irony.’ Comic writers seldom or never perform such execution,—their easier task is to catch and appropriate the ridicule of that which is just becoming ridiculous. The poor wits of the Regency—their solemn humour—their long-drawn sentiments—were at a sad discount. Ménage and others wished to leave the country, and find out some region which might better answer to their conceptions of the *Pays du Tendre*, and similar pastoral kingdoms, on the other side of the Atlantic, just then rendered interesting by the discoveries of Champlain and Lasalle.

As for the morals of society, it is difficult to describe the pitch of extravagant license at which they now arrived. The contrast is startling between the apparent prudery of the salons of good society, and the reckless wildness which prevailed out of those guarded doors. Timandre, Cléante, and the other shepherd-heroes of the drawing-room, after passing the day in sighing sentiment, and capping verses with Clarice and Corisante, would adjourn to spend the night in orgies, to which the boldest of later days were tea-table recreations. There are sins congenial to high society at all times, and probably, with an equal amount of wealth and luxury, always pretty equally prevailing; but the peculiarity of the seventeenth century in France was, that the ordinary distinction between crime and gentlemanly vice was lost sight of. In the honest originality of the day, sins against one commandment were regarded as scarcely more discreditable, in a social point of view, than sins against another. In the early part of Louis XIII.’s reign, the fashionable frolic of the evening was to rob pedestrians in the dark streets of Paris of their cloaks. There is a well-known story in Rochefort’s *Memoirs*, of the adroitness of Gaston Duke of Orleans in this exercise; and of the ill-luck of some of his comrades who

attempted to hide themselves behind Henry IV.'s statue on the Pont Neuf. But what Gaston practised in the spirit of aristocratic sport, others perpetrated from more obvious motives. The Sieur Desternod avows, that in his poverty he frequently thought of this resource, but was deterred by fear of capture. Bussy Rabutin was robbed by two *filous de qualité*, by no means *pour rire*, but in good earnest. In the provinces, gentlemen were occasionally associated with bands of highway robbers. Tallemant des Réaux mentions a personage of this class, who used when in company to practise on four chairs the attitude he should assume when tied to the cross of St Andrew for the purpose of being broken alive; which destiny ultimately befell him. The same writer speaks, without any symptoms of astonishment, of ladies as well as gentlemen who were known to derive part of their income from false coining! The 'bloods' of Charles the Second's reign were timid, as well as gross and clumsy imitators of the men of fashion of the preceding generation at Paris; for Buckingham and Rochester tried to import, not the improved style which prevailed in France at the date of their experiment, but what they themselves remembered of the rough licentious days of their exile during the Commonwealth; so that in this instance, as usual, England was picking up the cast-off rags of her neighbour's fashions.

The correspondence of Bussy Rabutin with Madame de Sévigné, furnishes a singular instance of the juxtaposition of extremes, common in that age, and the mutual toleration which vice and virtue, dissipation and pedantry, seem to have exercised towards each other. Bussy must have been esteemed a scoundrel, according to the rules of almost any conceivable society. He had outraged a helpless woman by a forcible abduction. It is true he had been deceived as to her inclinations, but this was because he was betrayed by her Confessor, whom he had bribed. He was notorious, not so much for his triumphs over his fair acquaintances, as for his propensity for ruining their reputation, and exposing them to the world. 'He loved no one,' says St Evremond, 'and never won the affections of any one.' He seems to have been shunned for his questionable dealings in transactions of honour, among men, almost as much as he was admired for his brilliancy, in female circles. He had published an infamous libel, in which he recounted the scandalous histories of most of the women of his acquaintance. He had laid siege to the honour of his cousin Madame de Sévigné for many years. Disappointed in his pursuit, he had slandered her grossly among the rest; yet the Princess of Letter-Writers not only forgives all his sins against herself and mankind, but continues through all her

volumes her sentimental correspondence with this contemptible reprobate. Platonism, philosophy, literature, and scandal, are all discussed with perfect good-humour. She enters into all his projects; witness her sympathy with him through one of his lawsuits, which was neither more nor less than a disgraceful attempt to corrupt justice and oppress an innocent party. Much may be allowed for the passion of clanship, which bound the fair prude to the head of all the Rabutins; it has been suggested also, that fear was at the bottom of her forbearance; but, after all, the connexion hardly says much, we will not say for the reality, but for the profoundness of her moral and religious feelings.

Every one will remember Charles Lamb's ingenious, and not altogether sophistical defence of the characters in the English 'middle comedy' of Congreve and his successors, namely, that no reader takes them, and the fictitious world in which they are placed, for realities; that they move in an atmosphere of their own, to which we feel the recognised morality of the everyday world to be inappropriate. It is with almost the same feeling that one approaches the *Memoirs of the Fronde* and the *Regency of Anne*;—the records of the men and women who were the real prototypes of those English profligates from whom Congreve's characters were taken. It is difficult to realize, and still more to describe, the impressions produced by a world in which all seems, at first sight, to have been show and representation. Every man lived, literally, not for himself, but for and in the world. Conventional habits depressed and threw into the background substantial interests and passions, and brought forward into exaggerated relief the most unsubstantial frivolities; and the result is, that in the records of those times there seems to be almost as much reality in the last as in the first. The strongest feelings, the profoundest calculations, use the same language, wear the same dress, with the fantastic impulses of fashion. Mortal hate demeans itself just like wounded punctilio; the passion of a life like, the gallantry of an hour; the struggle for political supremacy like the rivalry of a game at billiards. Men and women put on their shepherds' hats, and talk couplets or sonnets to each other, with quite as much solemnity as they use in discussing their most important interests. Nay, to speak of more serious matters, ladies and gentlemen set about 'making their salvation,' as if they projected a party to the baths of Bourbon. All seems a pageant; the people masqueraders; or rather, masques with no faces under them; or as if France had been peopled with creatures resembling the Sylphs and Undines who then came into fashion,—brilliant and beautiful, with all the outward attributes of humanity, but unprovided with souls.

Paris, at this time, it must be remembered, though the greatest city of Europe, yet resembled in many respects what, in the nineteenth century, we should term a large provincial town. Hemmed within its old walls, with their grotesque coronet of windmills, and swelled by all the political causes which at this period drove within its gates the inhabitants of the provinces, the population was numerous beyond all reasonable proportion to the narrow compass in which it was contained; for if some spaces, then encumbered with narrow streets, have since been cleared, as in the neighbourhood of the Louvre, other and much larger spots within the circuit of the Boulevards, now built on, were then the demesnes of convents and palaces. Three great convents—those of the Assumption, the Feuillans, and the Capucins—occupied the site of the modern Rue Rivoli, and streets which branch from it. That of Mazarin's palace was so extensive, that on one half of it (bought by Louis XIV., and given to the East India Company) the Rue Vivienne and Place de la Bourse are situate. Its sanitary condition was as bad as possible; worse, probably, than in the middle ages; owing to the greater accumulation of people, and increased height of the houses.* Even the ordinary habit of leaving the city in the summer, was interrupted for thirty or forty years in the middle of the seventeenth century;—at first, from the general insecurity of the country; afterwards, through habit, and because, in Louis XIV.'s earlier wars, while a portion of good society was absent on the frontier, those who stayed at home preferred remaining in Paris, for the sake of obtaining intelligence. Packed closely together in this steaming atmosphere, the higher classes lived and moved in a perpetual fever of society. The fashion of *alcoves* and *ruelles* dates from the beginning of this period. The alcove, as is well known to those who are familiar with old-fashioned domestic architecture, was the space, generally dome-shaped or vaulted and highly decorated, (the word is Arabic, and signifies a vault,) at the end of the bed-chamber, forming a kind of second room enclosed in a larger one. Here the bed of the lady was placed, on its *estrade*, or elevated dais, on which, as a throne, she received her morning visitors. The *ruelles*, or alleys, were the narrow lanes left between the estrade and the walls, in which the crowd of visitors assembled;—filled, from early day to afternoon, in

* About the year 1660, a medical observer remarked, that his brass door-handles, in rooms looking on the street, became covered with verdigris every morning; which continued until some attempts were made at drainage in the quarter.

illustrious houses, with a succession of gay cavaliers, prim men of letters, and soft ecclesiastics. Retirement and privacy were neither known nor appreciated as luxuries. There are some curious remarks in Saint Simon on the results of the invention of bells in houses;—a new thing when he wrote, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The want of them in earlier times rendered it almost necessary for a lady to have assistance at hand; common people had their servants within call, whence arose the familiar and pleasant domestics of Molière; those of higher rank were waited on by ladies of birth and education, who were not thought to demean themselves by performing these indispensable offices. Bells had a great share in reducing us to that seclusion—pleasant, but unsocial—in which we now live. The chief promenade of the afternoon was the Cours la Reine, on the south side of the Tuileries gardens, from which the mechanical public was excluded. Here Marie de Medicis paraded in her globe-shaped *Coche*; and Bassompierre exhibited the first carriage with glass windows. When ‘the great Mademoiselle’ was asked what she had regretted most during her political banishment from Paris, she answered—the masquerades, the fair of St Germain, (a kind of fashionable bazar, which was held in February every year,) and the Cours. But Paris, though rich in Convent and Palace gardens, was at this time very ill provided with spaces for public recreation. In the hot weather, it was no uncommon fashion for gay society to assemble in the Seine, like the company at old-fashioned baths. Evelyn (1651) was startled by the apparition of a bevy of ladies thus publicly bathing, at Conflans, attended by their cavaliers. Then followed the theatre; the new amusement of the age, and enjoyed with all the zest which novelty lent as yet to the noblest of public diversions—a diversion which not only amused the senses, but opened a new world to the heart and intellect, and which promised greater things than in the subsequent course of events it has performed. Now that the dramatic art is every where on the decline—its national existence, it should seem from all history, being necessarily brief—it is difficult to realize the importance which it once possessed, or the essential benefits which, be it said, in spite of all purists, it once rendered to society: and nowhere was this so much felt as in Paris. Much might be said of the effect of the drama as not only an accompaniment, but a cause of increasing refinement in manners; but as to its immediate influence on order and decency, it is sufficient to refer to a saying of M. de Sartines, the minister of police of a later period, that during the three weeks when the theatres were not open,

he found it necessary to double the watch. Last came the night, with its train of endless gaiety and extravagance. The fêtes of Mazarin and his contemporaries equalled any similar displays of later days in luxury, while they were unrivalled in wild and grotesque license; the whole soul of society was poured out in the extravagant orgies of the masquerade; while ladies were parading, by day, at the head of armed brigades, female costume was a fashionable evening disguise for gentlemen. Gaston Duke of Orleans, was celebrated for the grace with which he wore it; and among the strange adventures of the Abbé de Choisy, afterwards a zealous dignitary of the church, who chose for several years to assume that dress in general society, it is perhaps the strangest, that he used to attend, in woman's attire, at the church of St Médard, and present the *pain béni* to his acquaintances. This fantastic irregularity was finally put a stop to, like so many others, by Louis XIV., as his notions of decorum advanced—when, after many years' solemn devotion to the mysteries of the ballet—after enacting Bensérade's gods and demigods, heroes and knights, shepherds and savages, until flattery was fairly exhausted, and could scarcely spin out a couplet more in his honour—the great monarch became slowly alive to the idea that he was laughed at, and abolished the fashion for ever.

But the aspect of ordinary life was scarcely less diversified. Every evening reunited the customary society of ladies' apartments for conversation, varying from the most transcendent pedantry to the lowest merriment, buffoonery, and *jeux de société*, until Mazarin brought in cards, which rapidly swallowed up all minor follies. Dancing was the order of the evening, when 'les vingt-quatre violons,' the fiddlers of the royal establishment, the Strauss or Jullien band of their epoch, were to be procured; and a busy life they must have had of it; few grandees, like Mademoiselle de Montpensier, kept their own 'violons.' And what dancing! The art lost half its spirit and attraction, when the graceful fashion of the seventeenth century—that of the lady choosing her partner—came to an end. But not only its spirit, but its high importance and dignity, were as yet unabated. We are misled by our own modern notions, when we marvel at Sir Christopher Hatton, the dancing Chancellor; or at Elizabeth, for being smitten with his attractive movements; or at the venerable fashions of our Inns of Court, when 'the ancient reader, the music being begun, called to him the master of the revels; and at the second call, the ancient, with his white staff, advanced forward, and began to lead the measures, followed first by the barristers, and then the gentlemen under the bar, all according

- ‘to their several antiquities;’—a practice, possibly, absurd, but each age has its absurdities; and modern benchers having abolished the dancing qualification, appear to have announced that their office requires no qualification at all. In those days, however, all the world danced, from the King to the Savoyard with his monkey. We have seen Richelieu’s performance with the castanets; but conceive the great and grave Sully indulging in similar exhibitions! Yet, if we may believe Tallemant des Réaux, the custom of his household was, that ‘every evening until the death of Henry IV., a certain La Roche, valet-de-chambre to the king, used to play on his lute the dances of the time; and M. de Sully danced by himself, with an extravagant kind of cap on his head, which he generally wore in his cabinet. The spectators were Duret, afterwards Président de Chevry, and La Claville, afterwards Seigneur de Chavigny; who, with some women of indifferent reputation, were in the habit of buffooning every day with him.’ Does not a graver even than Sully—the great Jansenist Abbé Arnauld—recount, with some embarrassment, how he was forced to dance at the court of Modena? ‘It is true,’ says he, putting the best face on the circumstance, ‘that, properly speaking, we did not dance, but only walked in cadence, without even taking off our cloaks.’

• The extremely close quarters into which the fashionable circles were packed, gave, as we have said, a certain air which we should now call provincial even to this, the finest society of Europe. There were the same sets, jealousies, caprices, cabals, which are found in provincial assemblages; the same want of a recognised centre, such as a court affords; until Louis XIV. had reorganized that head of the body of fashion. Newspapers were scarcely known; Loret’s odd rhyming ‘Gazettes of the elegant world’ were indeed a kind of versified *Morning Post*, as minute in their descriptions, but less fresh in intelligence; but their places, as far as scandal and gossip were concerned, seem to have been more amply supplied by the extraordinary custom of the ‘couplets’ or ‘noels,’ which circulated from drawing-room to drawing-room. Not an adventure or misadventure could be reported or suspected, of a fair lady or cavalier of honour, but it was immediately tagged into verse, and found its way in this shape first into the hands of the gossips, then into those of the street musicians. Many of these innumerable epigrams have wit and smartness; many more an astonishing effrontery. But no kind of personality was forbidden in an age in which no one dreamt of privacy. Bussy’s fancy for hanging the walls of his chateau with the portraits of living beauties, with biographical sketches and his own satirical comments by way of

inscriptions, was so far from exciting any indignation, that many ladies gave him their own portraits, in the hopes of obtaining a flattering notice. In Boileau's satires, as they at first came out, living individuals, even those accused of gross offences, were attacked by name,—a license which was abandoned in his later editions, under a severer government and stricter manners. People were born in public—married in public, the bride receiving all the world in her alcove the day after the wedding—and died in public. Death was but the last scene of the drama, to be performed with a theatrical bow and exit. The young beauty, perishing of dissipation, made her adieus to the world in appropriate costume and sentiments. The worn-out statesman might not turn his face to the wall in peace, but was surrounded by a whole court in full dress, and talked on until his husky accents could no longer convey the last of his smart sayings to the listeners.*

Yet this wild world or chaos was far from unfavourable to the development, not only of individual energy, but of individual virtue. Port-Royal flourished not only contemporaneously, but to a certain extent in connexion with the Place Royale. Society, though far from realizing the promise of the earlier part of the century, was still free, and its atmosphere animating. There was room for action, and an exciting air to breathe. All was soon to close, and a new act of the drama to commence. At the conclusion of the Fronde, all parties threw themselves at the feet of the young Louis XIV., like a set of dancers tired out with their own mad exertions. The task of the new King was half accomplished for him when he began to reign; but he carried it into thorough execution, with all the energy of that steady resolve, hard heart, and admirable digestion, which almost made a great man of a very ordinary one. He had to restore this agitated world to order, and give to these diffused powers a uniform and regulated action. All this he performed; but he could not alter the unbending law of nature, which forbids individual greatness to arise without freedom. Nearly all the truly great names of the great reign are those of men whose education had been completed, and their intellectual majority attained, in the prior period of anarchy. The second crop—that of Louis's own contemporaries—was far inferior: the third,

* See the well-known print of Mazarin's death-bed, surrounded by ladies at cards. According to Grimm, the Maréchale de Luxembourg and two of her friends, played at loto by that of Madame du Deffand till she expired. But at that time the proceeding was at least thought singular.

feeble and effete. A new period of social license was necessary to invigorate anew the national genius.

Of this long reign, the first years only were brilliant. While the Spanish war lasted, Paris, as we have seen, held continual festival. But after the peace of the Pyrenees, and the death of Mazarin, (1660,) the King and Court began to remove from Paris, first to Fontainebleau, afterwards to St Germain's, and ultimately settled down in the stateliness of Versailles. This great change in the habits of the higher classes was very injurious to the metropolis, considered as a centre of society. The *Marais*, or neighbourhood of the Place Royale, continued long to be the fashionable quarter. The quays of the left bank, whose architectural embellishment dates chiefly from this reign, became popular as promenades: the world of fashion, for a few years, used to parade up and down the broiling pavement of the Quais des Theatins and Malaquais. Here Molière lived, (Quai Conti;) and here, for a short time, his troop was established. But the eastern end of the Faubourg Saint Germain was ultimately selected in 1687, after many delays, as the headquarters of the *Comédie Française*, driven from the Palais Royal by Lully's Opera company, the newest and most successful speculation of the day; for Lully, after fourteen years' directorship, died worth 630,000 livres in gold—a fact almost incredible, and solitary in the annals of managership. Racine has detailed the difficulty which the poor comedians found in lodging themselves, from the opposition of scrupulous Curates and purse-proud citizens. A troop of robbers could scarcely have been chased from site to site with greater pertinacity than these, the most active promoters of French, and therefore European civilization. At length they were planted in the Rue des Fossés St Germain, now Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie; where Procopio the Sicilian established his *Café*, the grandfather of all *Cafés*,—and the ancient rendezvous of the literary and theatrical world; which still exists—furnishing coffee and domino's to a few students—to testify of the site of the most flourishing and famous of all European theatres: for, taking all things together, the drama has never, in modern times, risen to such importance as within those walls. The theatre was closed in 1770, and is said to be now a restaurant. Marat's last lodging was close by: he had been driven from den to den, almost as assiduously as the poor actors.

It was not until the reign of Louis XV. that the Faubourg Saint Germain became the aristocratic quarter,—a glory which may now be said to have nearly abandoned those monotonous walls, to irradiate, for the present, the gayer roofs of the Faubourg Saint Honoré.

Even on the French day burial in consecrated ground
to the performers in their theatres.

In the absence of the court from Paris, the Bourgeoisie and the Professions rose out of comparative insignificance, thus preparing the Revolution from afar; and, first and foremost, the profession of the law. The melancholy quarter of the Ile Saint Louis, which arose out of a building speculation of the seventeenth century, was for a time a favourite resort of second-rate fashion, and legal fashion in particular. It had been a rural *pleasance* belonging to the Chapter of Notre-Dame. In its gardens the last crusade was preached by the Cardinal Legate Nicholas, in 1313, when Philippe de Valois, Edward II. of England, and many lords, both French and English, took the cross—an empty parade, for the spirit of Saint Louis became extinct in the generation which succeeded him. The same gardens were the scene of the famous single combat between the dog of Montargis and the murderer. In 1614, the construction of the quarter was begun; but the litigious propensities of the Chapter ruined three successive sets of adventurers before it was completed. When it rose—smart, white, and uniform—from the muddy waters of the Seine, it attracted at once a portion of the richer classes of the metropolis; for the fear of malaria had not yet begun to remove the habitations of the wealthy from the river borders,—those favourite haunts of earlier times. But it became especially the headquarters of legal families, by reason of its neighbourhood to the Palais de Justice. The Hotel Bretonvilliers, planted on the eastern extremity of the isle, where the Seine first divides on entering Paris, is termed by Tallemant des Réaux, in an ecstasy of Cockney admiration, ‘the ‘most finely situated building in the world, after the Scraglio!’ The Hotel Lambert, built for a President of that name, dreary and begrimed as its exterior now appears, contains within, a perfect treasury of curiosities for those fond of the details of social life long since departed. Under a succession of rich and fashionable owners, it received nearly all the literature and art of Paris for a century, down to Voltaire and his Marchioness. There is a world of Parisian art half choked in its venerable dust—ceilings by Lebrun and Lesueur, (though his finest paintings have been removed;) architectural details by Leveau, sculptures of François Perier—but all is decayed, and with difficulty preserved from imminent collapse. It stands a vast ruin in a decayed quarter. Dyers and Printers seem now the most numerous occupants of the Isle St Louis; and it wears the singular aspect of a French provincial town of the dullest class, inserted, as it were, bodily into the centre of the turbulent metropolis.

The Orleans Regency saw the birth of the Quarter de la

Chausseé d'Antin; of which the four or five well-known streets have more abundant and more various history to record, than any similar spot in Europe of the same age. Before 1720, a marshy, uneven, ill kept up cross-road, conducted from the Boulevards to the scattered fields of Clichy and Les Porcherons, on the north-west of Paris. It was the popular line of communication with suburbs singularly rich in *guinguettes*, rural taverns, and a variety of retreats abundantly frequented by the fashionable youth of that moral epoch. *On y allait gris, on en revenait ivre.* On Sundays, half the idle population of Paris turned out in the same direction. The fields were especially thronged with parties of the military and their female companions. If there was a marked absence at the evening muster, of the Dragons de la Reine or the Gardes-Suisses, it was only necessary to march a patrolle across the common-fields of the Porcherons, and soldiers were gathered in abundance. But, on week-days, more fashionable visitors were supposed to throng the dirty lane from the Porte Gaillon to the same village. Many a squalid hackney-coach was suspected of conveying a load of rank and beauty to some mysterious rendezvous. Many times aristocratic rapiers were crossed against the blades of plebeian intruders in out-of-the-way corners; for, 'tous les vilains,' as St Simon condescendingly observes, 'n'ont pas toujours peur.' Where the Rue de la Chausseé d'Antin now crosses the Rue de Provence stood, in those days, a rickety bridge across the sewer or Ruisseau de Ménilmontant: it was called the Pont d'Arcans. Here it was that the Comte de Fiesque (*le petit bon* of Madame de Sévigné) encountered M. de Tallard, each having a fair friend in his company; but Madame de Lionne and Mademoiselle d'Arquien threw themselves between the combatants like the Sabines of old, and they parted, each exchanging a cursory embrace with the lady who did not belong to him.

In 1720 the municipality was authorised to open a new street along this popular line of road; and the ground on each side was rapidly occupied by suburban hermitages, succeeded in their turn by gay hotels. It has had a greater succession of names than any other in fickle Paris. It was first Rue de la Chaussée Gaillon; then De l'Hotel Dieu, (from passing over some ground belonging to that foundation;) then De la Chaussée d'Antin. This name it derived from the Hotel d'Antin, the celebrated residence of the well-known voluptuary, the Duke de Richelieu; which stood, and still stands, we believe, near the southern side of the Boulevard, facing the entrance of the street;—commonly called Pavillon de Hanovre, because the funds for its con-

struction were said to have been mainly drawn from the pockets of the people of Hanover during the Duke's military occupation of the Electorate. Under this name the street rose and thrived; at first as a street of a certain fashion, though of a rather equivocal description; from which position it grew by degrees into the choice seat of commercial opulence and lettered dignity; and ultimately into the headquarters of the transitory aristocracy of the Empire. Here was the hotel of Madame Montesson, who attained the honour of marrying a Prince of the Blood. Here lived Madame Recamier. It was in the same street that the fair Guimard raised herself an enchanted palace, with the money of her sultan-like adorer the Prince de Soubise. But *le squelette des graces* was better skilled in ruining Princes than enriching herself. She sold her hotel by lottery. It was won by the Countess Dulau, who sold it to Perregaux the banker, for 500,000 francs. Here Perregaux' daughter was married to Marmont; and Perregaux' clerk, Jacques Laffitte, laid the foundation of the fortune which furnished the sinews of war in those memorable days which ruined both Marmont and himself. The glory of the hotel is departed; the bank subsists, but the residence is gone; and we rather think that an apothecary's shop occupies the front of the temple of the hooped and powdered Terpsichore.

In 1791 the street took the name of Mirabeau, who lodged in it, at No. 42. It was from hence that one hundred thousand mourners escorted the corpse of the mighty demagogue to St Geneviève. In 1793, the memory of Mirabeau was already proscribed; his ashes were banished from the Pantheon; and the street took the name of Mont Blanc, the Republic having recently taken the trouble of annexing Savoy to its dominions. It was under this name that it shared so largely in the glories of the Empire. Madame Tallien, (afterwards more uneasily lodged as Princess de Chimay, among the dowagers of the Faubourg St Germain,) Madame Recamier, Cardinal Fesch, and others, shed a brief lustre on its annals. Next to Fesch lived Ney, and afterwards Caulaincourt; and next again Sebastiani. But 1815 came, and swept away the name of Mont Blanc, and the fortunes and glories of the age of Napoleon. The street resumed its ante-revolutionary title. It struggled with decaying prosperity against the tide of fashion, which gradually drifted the monied aristocracy into more distant quarters; and, unlike its sister streets of the neighbourhood, 1830 brought it no relief, either in change of name or change of circumstances. Vulgar commerce has invaded it—upstart omnibuses have replaced the equipages of old times—it is become already a modern antique;—

the deserted metropolis of M. Scribe, which still seems to the imagination peopled with wealthy financiers, their sentimental ladies and interesting secretaries, magnanimous colonels of the Empire, rich uncles in *ailes de pigeon*, and cravats of the fashion of the Directory, and all the other *dramatis personæ* of that amusing Vaudeville-world which was the delight of our youth.

The streets immediately adjoining, partake of the same character; the whole quarter is full of memorials of the very quintessence of recent history. Other districts have monopolized more of aristocratic dignity and dulness: the very life of the world has pulsed in these narrow avenues. Where the street just described abuts to the north on the Rue St Lazare, stood a well-known tavern, famous in the bacchanalian stanzas of Vadé, and his brother poets, under the name of the cabaret Ramponneau;—celebrated, also, for the visits paid it occasionally by personages scarcely to be expected in a cabaret; where, as some strange rumours say, Madame de Genlis herself, more than once, in frolicsome disguise, shared in the revelry of lackeys and Gardes Suisses. Close by, enveloped in its discreet shrubbery, stood the Pavillon de Fronsac, another residence of the Marshal Duke of Richelieu, whose name is almost as intimately connected with the history of modern Paris as that of the Cardinal. This pavilion became, under the Consulate, the retreat of the beautiful Creole, Madame Hamelin,—the Queen of fashion for a short season; and who may be said to have had the honour of co-operating with Napoleon in reducing the wild exuberance of the Republic to decency and order. Under her soft influence, the orgies of Madame Tallien and her contemporaries, gave place to the rather stiffly brilliant style of the Napoleonic era. In her reign the *contre-danse* returned, and the epoch of the waltz began. Although satirists were not wanting—although some coarse rivals insinuated that the fair West Indian disseminated *des miasmes de négresse*, and others would compare her features to those of Rustan, the Emperor's Mameluke—yet her triumph was complete: contractors and marshals—the demigods of the day—Ouvrard, Perregaux, Montholon, Moreau, sighed at her feet; and rumour, for a moment, whispered unutterable things of Cæsar himself: it then died away, and, with its decay, soon ended Madame Hamelin's ephemeral reign. Her pavilion is still preserved by its owner, the Duchess of Vicenza, amidst the general demolition which has taken place of the suburban habitations of this quarter; most of which were erected either by ladies of the opera or financiers. 'Tivoli,' once so well known to idlers in Paris, situated close to the northern end of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, was originally the garden of one of these

favourites of fortune, the farmer-general La Bouxière, who spent enormous sums on its construction.

The Rue Laffitte, hard by, was originally christened Rue d'Artois in 1770; in honour of the ill-fated prince whom, after sixty agitated years, Laffitte was to drive from the throne. While the street was still fresh in the glory of its white unmeaning façades, one Cérutti, a Piedmontese, took a lodging in an entresol. He had been a Jesuit; had written in defence of the Jesuits, and made noise enough in their cause to get his book condemned to the flames by the parliament of Paris. But times were altered: disappointments in love and politics had turned the ex-Jesuit into a democrat; and Cérutti soon set up a revolutionary Journal—*La Feuille Villageoise*. Mirabeau and Talleyrand were his chief Contributors. The Journal succeeded; Cérutti pronounced Mirabeau's funeral oration; and these services to the nation secured for him the most evanescent of French honours. The name of Cérutti was substituted for d'Artois. At the end of the street rose the magnificent Hotel Thélusson—a residence of the Genevese banker, the patron of Necker; whose fortune and less ambitious popularity survived those of his more celebrated junior partner. This was such a palace as might have been built out of Sèvres china, to be inhabited by shepherds and lap-dogs, *à la Louis XV.* In the short interval of wild bacchanalian excitement which followed the downfall of Robespierre—when the violently-repressed habits of a licentious age and people burst furiously forth—it became the headquarters of the luxury of the day. The Hotel d'Augny, in the same neighbourhood, (afterwards the residence of M. Aguado,) had been the scene of the first *Bals à la Victime*. But the *Bals Thélusson* surpassed even the *noctes Neronis jam medias*,—the Luxembourg festivals of Barras. Here was the rendezvous of the *Incroyables* and *Merveilleuses*. While Madame Talliën, the Princess of the Luxembourg, affected the Roman style and costume,—descending even to the stockingless simplicity of classical times, the rival salon of Madame Thélusson was peopled by *Athéniennes*, equally undressed, and less ornamented. But all the wit and talent of the day frequented it, with one remarkable exception—Madame de Staël did not appear there: pride, on one side or the other, banished the daughter of the junior partner from the drawing-room of the widow of his quondam associate.

Here it was that Buonaparte first dreamed of fashionable life. The young, unpolished, but all-observing provincial lieutenant, living in his quiet lodgings of the Rue du Mail, after the *Comité de Salut Public* had turned him out of active employment,

upon his refusal to serve in La Vendée, met Madame Beauharnais in this society," on which we may imagine him to have looked with a kind of envious admiration. However this may be, he and his family evinced a marked partiality for the Chaussée d'Antin. After his conquest of the Sections, he removed to a charming little house hard by, in the Rue Chantierine—now, in his honour, Rue de la Victoire—where he lived until the hour arrived for his occupying the palaces of the Bourbons. Murat took the Hotel Thélusson. Not long after he left it, it fell into the hands of a spirit congenial with his own—an army tailor. M. Berchut had made a fortune by selling uniforms, in days when their first owners seldom had the good luck to wear them out. He invested it in building speculations. He demolished the celebrated hotel, with its arcades, gardens, artificial rocks, and all the recollections that belonged to the spot—and the street became dull and uniform as any of its white, flat-faced neighbours. But its political destinies were not accomplished. Here lived Jacques Laffitte. Hither, on the 29th July 1830, when the battle was wellnigh decided, flocked the courtiers of his provisional majesty, the populace, who seemed on the eve of a definite reinstatement in his anarchical rights. The sordid intriguer, the waiter on Providence, the timid capitalist who sought protection rather than promotion, crowded these approaches, now so solitary, with eager advice and covert solicitations. It was a trembling and undignified assemblage; for the result of affairs out of doors yet hung in the balance; the fear of being too late was in ludicrous conflict with that of being too early: at any moment, a few files of infantry might direct their steps towards the Rue d'Artois, become the focus of insurrection—and then the game was up. It is due to the worthy banker to say, that he stood firm, as became the representative of the great monied interest, in this its crowning struggle against feudality. M. Louis Blanc assures us, that on one occasion the sound of musketry in the neighbourhood actually cleared the hotel of all its visitors: it proved to be only the discharge in the air of a regiment fraternizing with the mob; but Laffitte remained at his post, and profited by the interval to get his sore leg dressed. One by one the guests returned, and complete triumph was announced by an unerring prognostic—the arrival of Talleyrand. Did it occur to the veteran to remember the meetings at his friend Cérutti's, and the *Feuille Villageoise*, and the concoction, forty years before, of the first act of the drama still in course of performance?

Laffitte was ruined by this revolution, as is well known. His hotel was repurchased for him by subscription; and an inscrip-

tion on the front long recorded the fact to passers-by. It has now been removed into the court-yard. Surely it was not a thing to be ashamed of. The genius of finance, however, has not quite abandoned its favourite quarter. M. Rothschild still lives in the 'Rue Laffitte;' and now and then illumines the quarter with a splendour of hospitality which reduces the Christendom of Paris to envy and despair.

As for the Rue Chantierine, or de la Victoire, its fates have been even more strangely checkered than those of its neighbours. Its early days formed a fit prelude to its coming history; for it was scarcely built when the two heroes of modern quackery, Cagliostro and Mesmer, did it the honour of making it the scene of their oracles—precursors of performers on a larger scale. For here Napoleon married Josephine, and became through her the owner of the pretty hotel, No. 6, which she had bought of Talma the actor: it had been built for the unfortunate Condorcet. Alas! the trumpet of fame has long been silenced in the Street of Victory, and its dreams of departed glory are only broken by the profane sound of Messrs Herz's pianofortes, which jangle perpetual discord, from one of its finest hotels of financial renown. But hard by, in the Place St George, dwells the last political illustrator of the quarter. Where could M. Thiers be lodged better—in those leisure intervals of his life which are so usefully spent when excluded from the *Hotel des Affaires Etrangères*—than here, amid the manes of the Empire, like Gibbon, breathing the inspiration of his subject in the ruined circle of the Coliseum?

Yet we must not leave this once celebrated quarter without noticing the frail link which still connects it with the living world of 1846. The streets and modern church of Notre Dame de Lorette, are worth a great deal more to the modern Parisian, than all the remembrances which cling round the thresholds of Napoleon and his Marshals. Here, at the extremity of the Rue Laffitte, close to the noise and vulgarity of the Faubourg Montmartre, and under the immediate presidency of M. Thiers, rises a new and neat little district, peopled by all the anomalous world which pertains to the opera and the public exhibitions; and by that seductive and interesting class of the population to whom M. Nestor Roqueplan first gave the name of *Lorettes*. In this coquettish little Church of Notre Dame, gilt like the back of a book, with its soft carpets and sweet perfumes, the theatrical Parisian may admire the velvet *prie-Dieu*s of the Elslers, the Dumilâtres, and other attractions. La Guimard and La Duthé, the ancient divinities of the district, have been replaced by goddesses no less ethereal.

But we are trespassing far beyond the bounds of our sober antiquarianism. We have been dreaming of old Paris, in the middle of a world too active and awake to suit with the temper of such reveries. The endeavour to fix the attention on the past has even something painful, and out of place, in full view of a present so busy and changeful as ours. Centuries of stationary ease, or slow advance, seem those in which the spirit of man most fitly addresses itself to look backward, and to indulge in historical inquiry. Now, when we are plainly commencing an era of changes in the fortunes of our race, the speculator who turns round to contemplate the past vicissitudes of things, seems almost like the man who should busy himself in meditating and recounting the dreams of the night, at his entrance on a day of active and brilliant exertion. New Paris, the centre of a great kingdom, with its lines of railway connexion, will outgrow the limits of the city of our day, ten times more rapidly than the existing city has swelled beyond the old boundary of the Romans in their palisaded island. The dense centre will be cleared out; whole quarters of the city of Philip le Bel will be swept away, to make elbow-room for the new generation; while the displaced mass is spread far and wide over the plains, which seem to invite its dispersion. The fortifications of 1841, constructed on the principle of 'keeping the *outer enceinte* at a distance from the city, properly so called,' will become Boulevards in their turn; and the fashion of some future age will make its promenades of those specimens of the wisdom of the first Orleans reign. All this seems to stand plainly written in the earliest half-open pages of the book of the future; but how much uncertainty, in the mean time, involves the moral and intellectual prospects of the great people whose coming generations are to profit by this vast extension of civilisation!

ART. III.—1. *The Local Taxes of the United Kingdom; containing a Digest of the Law, with a Summary of Statistical Information, concerning the several Local Taxes in England, Scotland, and Ireland.* Published under the direction of the POOR-LAW COMMISSIONERS. 8vo. London: 1846.

2.—*Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Burdens affecting Real Property, together with the Minutes of Evidence taken before the said Committee.* Session 1846.

MANY causes have, in this country, combined to concentrate public attention upon the taxes levied and expended by the General government, and to divert it from the Local taxes. Not only is the amount of the general taxes larger, but it is looked at in the aggregate. Every body knows that the public revenue of the kingdom amounts to about fifty millions a-year. The expenditure, too, involves many of those national interests, and political questions, which occupy the chief attention of the statesman, and decide the movements of parties and the fate of ministries. The conduct of wars, military and naval establishments, the defence of the country, the maintenance of the Sovereign, the salaries and pensions of ministers of state, the rewards of great men; these, and other similar questions, are intimately connected with the expenditure of the general taxes. Both their levy, moreover, and their expenditure, are under the direct control of Parliament; all the decisions relating to them are made upon the immediate responsibility of the government, and are subjected to parliamentary discussion. On the other hand, the local taxation is not only less in amount, but it is rarely viewed in the aggregate. In general, it is known merely by some fractional part. We either hear of the total amount of the poor's rate, or the highway rate, or the county rate, in England, or Scotland, or Ireland; or, what is more common, of the amount of one of these taxes in a single parish. No attempt, in as far as we know, was made to procure an authentic account of the total amount of the local taxes of the United Kingdom, until the last session of Parliament; and even now, nothing can be obtained but an imperfect estimate. There are no means at present of laying before Parliament an account of the actual receipt and expenditure of the local taxes. As to their expenditure, although it relates to important national interests, (such as the punishment and prosecution of offenders, the relief of the poor, the maintenance of roads and bridges, and the repair of churches,) the mode of its administration nevertheless withdraws

it from public notice. Instead of its application being decided by Parliamentary grants, and the debates being reported daily in the newspapers, the expenditure of the local taxes is managed by small bodies of magistrates, guardians, parish-vestries, surveyors, &c., whose proceedings are rarely known beyond the circle of their respective neighbourhoods. The salaries paid out of the local taxes are also petty in their amount, and received by obscure functionaries. Lastly, there is no public department having a general control over the local taxes, and charged with the duty of reporting upon them periodically, for the information of the legislature.

Since the establishment of the Poor-Law Commission, however, full accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the poor's rate—the largest of the local taxes in England—have been annually presented to Parliament. Moreover, in 1843, the Poor-Law Commissioners made a Report upon the local taxation of England, containing a complete statement of the law relating to this extensive subject, together with a summary of all the accessible statistical information. The materials contained in this Report have been arranged in a more commodious form, and the statement of the law has been brought down to the end of 1845, in the publication authorized by the same Commissioners, the title of which is prefixed to this article. In this volume are likewise contained, accounts of the local taxes of Scotland and Ireland, as well as of England.

A select committee of the House of Lords, appointed at the beginning of last session, to inquire into the burdens affecting real property, received much evidence upon the incidence and effects of the local taxes; and upon this evidence Lord Monteagle contributed a very valuable comment, which was subsequently printed as a separate Parliamentary Paper. [No. 449, sess. 1846.]

From the materials thus collected, we propose, first, to give a concise account of the local taxes of England, Scotland, and Ireland,—showing their number, the purposes to which they are applicable, the property on which they are incident, and their annual amount; as well as the principles on which they are founded, and the reasons for distinguishing them from the general taxes. We will afterwards examine the objections which have been made—particularly within the last few years—to the justice of the principle on which they are assessed; and will consider the proposals for the alteration of that principle, by extending the basis of their incidence.

By *local taxes* we understand taxes levied for a specified purpose, within a defined district, and expended by public officers whose functions are limited to that district.

As so understood, the local taxes of the United Kingdom fall into two classes, viz.—1. *rates* raised in defined districts; and, 2. *tolls, dues, and fees*, paid for particular services, or on certain occasions.

With regard to these two classes, the incidence of the first professes to be determined by the *ability to pay*, while that of the latter is regulated by the *benefit received*. ‘In the levy of a *rate*, the tax-payer is called upon to contribute to a general fund, on account of his possession or occupation of certain kinds of property within a defined district,—the amount of his contribution being proportioned to the value of the property. In other words, the ability to pay, as arising from such property, constitutes both the foundation of the liability and the measure of its extent. But when the tax assumes the shape of a *fee* or *toll*, it is demanded of the tax-payer without regard to his ability to pay it, in consideration of his receiving some advantage, for which it serves as the equivalent. The purposes attained by means of highway rates and turnpike tolls are precisely similar; but in the one case, the burden of maintaining the roads falls on the occupiers of property in the district, according to their ability as derived from that property; in the other, it falls on the particular individuals who actually experience the benefit, and who are required to pay certain sums on the specific occasions of their doing so.’*

Beginning with ENGLAND, the principal local rates are,—

1. The county and borough rates.
2. The poor’s rate.
3. The highway rate.
4. The church rate.

Besides these, there are the sewers’ rate, and the lighting and watching rate, with some other rates of minor importance.

Of these rates, the *county rate* is applicable to the erection and repair of county prisons, the payment of the prison officers, the expenses of prisoners, the costs of prosecuting offenders and of coroners’ inquests, the payments to special constables and the costs of a county police, the maintenance of county bridges, the repair of shire-halls and judges’ lodgings, the erection and maintenance of lunatic asylums, together with some other purposes.

The *borough rate* is applicable to the expenses of municipal government, such as the salaries of the borough officers, and to the expenses of criminal jurisdiction, similar to those defrayed out of the county rate.

The *poor's rate* is applicable to the relief of the poor, including the expenses of valuations for the poor rate, of removals, and their attendant litigation, and of pauper emigration. The expenses of the act for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages, of gratuitous vaccination, and of the census of the population, are also charged upon the poor rate, together with some other miscellaneous expenses wholly unconnected with the relief of the poor. It is to be observed, that the county and borough rate are in general paid out of the sum levied as poor's rate; so that the latter sum is always considerably larger than the sum expended for the relief of the poor.

The *highway rate*, as its name indicates, is expended on the repair of highways, and the payment of the salaries of surveyors; while the *church rate* is applicable to the repair and enlargement of churches, and to the furnishing of articles required for the service of the church, such as a communion table, bread and wine for the Lord's Supper, a bible and prayer-book, &c.

The other class of local taxes leviable in England consists of—

1. *Turnpike tolls*, levied upon certain roads which are placed under trustees appointed by local Acts of Parliament, and are not repaired out of the highway rate.

2. *Borough tolls*, levied in boroughs, and applicable to the general purposes of the borough fund.

3. *Light dues and port dues*; taxes levied on shipping, for defraying the expenses of lighthouses, and of the maintenance and management of harbours.

4. *Church dues and fees*, payable to the church on the performance and registration of the ecclesiastical rites of marriage, baptism, and burial.

5. *Marriage and registration fees*, payable to the civil registrar.

6. *Justiciary fees*, payable to clerks of the peace and clerks to justices.

It is a general characteristic of the local taxes, that they are levied for specified purposes, and are not applicable indiscriminately to the objects of local government. For example, the purposes to which the county rate, the poor's rate, the highway rate, or the church rate, can be applied, are defined by law; and although it sometimes happens, (as in the case of the county rate and poor's rate,) that these purposes are numerous, and of a miscellaneous character, nevertheless the rate, when levied, is only legally applicable to one of the enumerated objects. One effect of this arrangement is, that the rate-payer can follow the application of the money which he pays, and thus acquires a

stronger interest in watching over its administration. Thus, if a rate-payer is called upon for a larger amount of poor's rate, or highway rate, he knows that the relief of the poor, or the maintenance of the highways has become more costly. On the other hand, the objections of peculiar persons, or classes of persons, to the *purpose* of a rate, may lead to difficulties in its collection, which would not exist if the rate, like the Queen's taxes, was collected for the general and indefinite purposes of the government. For example, a Quaker who refuses to pay church rate without compulsion, nevertheless pays stamp duty, or postage duty voluntarily; although these taxes are applicable (among other expenses) to the maintenance of a fleet and army, and indeed to some ecclesiastical purposes.

We proceed next to state the total amounts, of the several local taxes, from the best and latest data which are accessible. It should, however, be observed, that the only local taxes of which there are regular annual returns, are the county and borough rate, the poor's rate, and the turnpike tolls:—

Relief of poor, (1845.)	L.5,039,703
Miscellaneous purposes defrayed out of	
poor's rate,	537,737
County and borough rate, (1845,)	1,279,962
Highway rate,	1,312,812
Church rate,	506,812
Sewers' rate, (metropolis,)	82,097
Rest of country,	unknown
Lighting and watching rate,	unknown

Total of rates in England,	L.8,759,123
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Turnpike tolls,	L.1,348,084
Borough tolls,	378,011
Light dues,	257,776
Port dues,	554,645
Justiciary fees,	68,725
Other miscellaneous fees,	unknown

Total of Tolls, &c., in England,	L.2,607,241
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Adding these two classes of local taxes together, we obtain the following result:—

Rates,	L.8,759,123
Tolls, dues, and fees,	2,607,241

Total local taxes in England,	L.11,366,364
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The local taxes of SCOTLAND fall under four heads, viz., those

applicable to the administration of justice, the internal transit, the relief of the poor, and the church and education—to which may be added the light dues. From the best account of these which can be obtained, their total amount is L.956,678 a-year; but this sum is far from complete.

The principal local tax of IRELAND is the county rate, or grand jury cess, applicable to nearly the same purposes as the county rate in England; viz. prisons and prison expenses, court-houses, and salaries to county offices. The Irish county cess is, however, applicable to the repair of roads as well as bridges; whereas, in England, there is a distinct rate for the maintenance of highways. The entire expenses of the police (about L.450,000 a-year) were, in the last session, transferred to the consolidated fund; previously, one-half had been borne by the county cess. The other local taxes, as they are enumerated, with their latest ascertained amounts, in the following table, need no explanation:—

	Date.	
Grand jury cess,	1845	L.1,149,923
Poor's rate,	1845	316,026
Lighting and Watching rate,	1845	7,139
Borough rate,	1844	7,946
Parish cess,	1832	23,319
Ministers' money,	1831	11,449
Rates under special acts in Dublin and other towns,	1844-6	116,013
Turnpike tolls,	1829-31	47,580
Light dues,	1843	53,335
Port dues,	1844	98,554
Total,		<hr/> L.1,831,287

Putting together the total amount of the local taxes for each portion of the United Kingdom, we obtain the following result:—

England,	L.11,366,364
Scotland,	956,678
Ireland,	1,831,287
Total,	<hr/> L.14,154,329

This sum, however, is still incomplete, and the entire local taxation of the United Kingdom may be safely stated, in round numbers, at L.15,000,000 a-year. Now, the general public expenditure, exclusive of the national debt, does not amount to L.21,000,000 a-year; so that the present amount of the local taxes, is nearly three-fourths of that portion of the public expen-

diture which is within the control of parliament—including even the civil list and other fixed charges. The public revenue of Prussia—a first-rate European power—does not amount to L.19,500,000; out of which sum it maintains, during peace, a standing army of above 250,000 men.

In order to illustrate the comparative pressure of the county rate and poor's rate in England, in successive years, we annex two tables, exhibiting the total sum levied for these two rates,—the sum expended for the relief of the poor, and the ratio of each to the population, in the years 1803, 1813, 1821, and 1831; and in the years from 1834—the year of the passing of the Poor-law Amendment Act—up to the present time.

Accounts showing the amount of money levied for Poor's rates and County rates, and the amount expended for the relief and maintenance of the poor in England and Wales, during each of the following years, with the rate per head of such levy and expenditure on the population.

Years ended Lady-Day.	Population of England and Wales in 1801, 1811, 1821, & 1831.	Levied for Poor's rates and County rates.	Ratio per head on the population.	Expended for the relief and maintenance of the poor.	Ratio per head on the population.
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
1803	8,872,980	5,348,205	12 0 $\frac{3}{4}$	4,077,891	9 2 $\frac{1}{4}$
1813	10,150,615	8,646,841	17 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	6,656,106	13 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1821	11,978,785	8,411,893	14 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	6,959,251	11 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
1831	13,897,187	8,279,218	11 11	6,798,889	9 9 $\frac{1}{2}$

Years ended Lady-Day.	Estimated population for the middle of each year.	Levied for Poor's rates and County rates.	Ratio per head on the population.	Expended for the relief and maintenance of the poor.	Ratio per head on the population.
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.
1834	14,372,000	8,338,079	11 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	6,317,255	8 9 $\frac{1}{2}$
1835	14,564,000	7,373,807	10 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	5,526,418	7 7
1836	14,758,000	6,354,538	8 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,717,630	6 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1837	14,955,000	5,294,566	7 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,044,741	5 5
1838	15,155,000	5,186,389	6 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,123,604	5 5 $\frac{1}{2}$
1839	15,357,000	5,613,938	7 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,406,907	5 8 $\frac{1}{2}$
1840	15,562,000	6,014,605	7 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,576,965	5 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
1841	15,770,000	6,351,828	8 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,760,929	6 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
1842	15,981,000	6,552,890	8 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,911,498	6 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
1843	16,194,000	7,085,595	8 9	5,208,027	6 5 $\frac{1}{2}$
1844	16,410,000	6,847,205	8 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	4,976,093	6 0 $\frac{1}{2}$
1845	16,629,000	6,791,006	8 2	5,039,703	6 0 $\frac{1}{2}$

From these tables it will be seen, that the total burden of the county rate and poor's rate of England, measured by the population,

was, in 1845, less than half its burden in 1813, as measured by the same test; and that the expenditure for the relief of the poor, tried by the same test, was about half the expenditure in 1813 and 1821. The ratio of the expenditure for the relief of the poor to the population was, in 1834, 8s. 9½d.: in 1837, 5s. 5d.; and in 1845, 6s. 0¾d. The county rate expenditure has risen, during the last half century, more than that for the relief of the poor. In the year 1792, the county rate expenditure is stated to have been L.222,628; in the year 1844, it was L.1,071,062. The increase of late years has likewise been considerable; at a period when the poor's relief expenditure has been stationary or diminishing. The payments for county and borough rates, which amounted only to L.604,203 in the year 1837, have, in the year 1845, reached the sum of L.1,279,962; that is to say, they have more than doubled in the last eight years.

Such being the amount of the local taxation of the United Kingdom, and such its importance, we have next to consider what objections are made to the justice and soundness of the principles upon which it is levied; and whether these objections rest on a solid basis.

The general policy of that portion of the local taxes which falls under the denomination of *tolls*, *dues*, and *fees*, has not often been called in question. As these payments are made as a sort of remuneration, for a benefit enjoyed or a service rendered, their incidence is usually considered equitable; yet the manner in which the turnpike tolls are raised is open to serious objections; and the pressure of this latter impost was so severely felt in South Wales a few years ago, that it gave rise to a formidable agrarian insurrection, which was only quelled by an alteration of the law, and a mitigation of the tolls.

It is, however, the other portion of the local taxes—that consisting of the *rates*—of which the policy and justice are most frequently called in question. The local rates levied in the United Kingdom do not fall short of L.11,000,000 a-year; of which sum nearly L.9,000,000 is levied in England alone. Let us now consider whether the incidence of these rates is consistent with sound principles of taxation.

The local rates of England are levied exclusively on *real* property. The rules for their imposition vary in some respects for the different rates; but it may be stated generally, that they are not levied on any sort of personal property, either vested or circulating, and that they fall exclusively on *real* property; although there are some sorts of real property—such as mineral mines, growing timber, and the class of hereditaments called in law *incorporeal*—which are not rateable.

The rate is in general assessed upon the occupier, not the owner; and it is assessed upon the net annual letting value of the tenement. It is therefore a tax on rent: in the case of *land*, it falls ultimately on the landlord; in the case of *houses*, where the rent is a mere remuneration for the cost of production, it probably falls on the occupier, and increases the annual cost of his house. The case of *tithes* is, however, different. The entire tithe, with certain limited deductions, including the cost of collection, is rated,—inasmuch as it is considered in the light of a net rent arising from land.

Real property, the subject of rating, includes not only land under cultivation, and tithe, but also houses and buildings of all sorts, coal-mines, quarries, wharfs, canals, railways, gas-pipes, and all other things yielding a profit, and permanently attached to the soil. It is therefore a mistake to suppose that the local rates fall exclusively on what is commonly termed the *landed interest*. All houses in town and country—all manufactories and buildings used in manufacturing and mining processes—are rated according to their annual letting value. The proportion which these latter classes of property bears to land is considerable, and it increases annually with the progress of improvement. Every new railway, dock, or similar public work, which is constructed, adds to the rateable property of the country, and in the parishes which are concerned in the improvement, shares the burdens which had been previously borne by the mere land. The opposition, as respects the incidence of the rates, is not between *agriculture* and *trade*, or between *town* and *country*, but between *real* and *personal* property.

The local rates may thus be described, generally, as taxes on the rent of real property. They are not an *income tax*, because they bear no relation to the amount of a person's income, so far as it is derived from professional services or the profits of trade. They are not a *property tax*, because they are not levied on money invested, or funded property. But they are imposed on real property, which may be made the subject of lease: and they are assessed upon that property, in proportion to the net rent which it would fetch in the market.

It is true that, according to the Act of 43 Eliz., as construed by the Courts at the beginning of the last century, inhabitants were held to be rateable for their *stock in trade*, which is *personal* property. This rateability, however, was subject to numerous limitations and exceptions: it applied only to residents, it did not extend to all trades; it was subject to a deduction for debts; and altogether the practical and legal difficulty of enforcing it was so great, that it was only introduced in a few parishes, and never had

a general operation. It is further to be observed, that only the stock of the *tradesman* or *artificer* was held to be rateable. *Farmer's* stock was from the beginning declared by the Courts not to be the subject of rating.

The principle upon which the poor's rate in Ireland is assessed, introduced by the Act of 1838, was borrowed from the English law. The Irish county cess is likewise levied exclusively upon real property.

The local rates of Scotland are not considerable in amount; the assessments for the poor in 1841 were only £129,335. The latter rate, according to the recent act for amending the poor-law, (8 and 9 Vict. c. 83,) may be either assessed upon the annual net rent of lands and heritages within the parish exclusively, or partly upon the rent of land, and partly upon the *means and substance*—i. e. the income—of the inhabitants. This act, therefore, so far as it goes, retains the pre-existing practice, by which, in certain towns and parishes, the assessment for the poor was partly levied upon the principle of an *income tax*.

To the system of local taxation just described, the principal objections appear to be twofold:—

1. That the local rates are, to a great extent, taxes on the *rent of land*, and therefore inexpedient.

2. That they are exclusively assessed on *real* property; and do not comprehend the annual proceeds of money and other *personal* property.

1. The objection to the local rates, on the ground that they consist to a great extent of taxes on the *rent of land*, is made by Mr M'Culloch in his *Treatise on Taxation*, where he has discussed the subject at considerable length. His views are summed up in the following passage:—‘Notwithstanding the low rate at which rents have been usually valued in assessments for the poor, and other local burdens, the influence of the latter in discouraging improvements has been dwelt upon by all agricultural writers from Arthur Young downwards; and, conjoined with tithe, has been the principal cause of the slowness of agricultural improvement in most parts of England during the last seventy or eighty years, as compared with its progress in Scotland. The more, indeed, that their operation is inquired into, the more clearly it will appear that taxes proportioned to the rent, or to the net or gross produce of the land, are the bane of every country in which they exist. They never can be otherwise than unequal; and, when carried to any considerable height, they hinder the spread of agricultural improvement, and exercise a most pernicious influence over the public prosperity.’—(P. 61.)

It is difficult to admit the force of the reasons adduced by Mr M'Culloch, for his general and decisive condemnation of all taxes on the rent of land. That the local rates of England have been at various times and places a heavy burden, cannot be doubted; and that they may have partially retarded the improvement of agriculture, is possible; but they have produced this effect rather by their excess than by their mere incidence—rather as *heavy* taxes, than simply as taxes on *rent*. There is no valid reason for thinking, that a *moderate* tax on the rent of land, is necessarily a bad tax. The best tax which can be devised, would cease to be good if its *amount* was excessive. Mr M'Culloch, on the other hand, approves highly of taxes on the rent of *houses*: these, he thinks, 'are among the least 'exceptionable that can be devised,' (p. 69;) 'they are every 'where reckoned among the least questionable modes in which 'a revenue can be raised,' (p. 74;) and he considers the abolition of the late house tax 'as an ill-advised concession to vulgar 'and unfounded clamour,' (p. 70.) It is not clear what grounds exist for drawing so broad a distinction between taxes on the rent of land, and taxes on the rent of houses; or for holding the former to be among the worst and the latter among the best means of raising a revenue. If taxes on the rent of land discourage the application of capital to farming, and the improvement of husbandry, do not taxes on the rent of houses equally discourage building, and deteriorate the dwellings of the people? In many cases, according to the English law of rating, it is impossible to distinguish between the rate on the land, and the rate on the house: a farm-house, for example, is valued to the poor's rate together with the farm; it is considered as constituting, together with the other improvements of the land, an integral part of the annual value of the tenement; according to the same principle as that adopted by the landlord and tenant in agreeing upon the *rent*.

2. The objection to the system of local taxation on the ground of the rates falling exclusively on *real* property, and not including *personalty*, is not only more current, but more powerful.* It must be admitted that these taxes do not comply with the first of Adam Smith's canons, viz. that each person's contribution to the revenue shall be as nearly as possible in

* See the evidence of the Rev. R. Jones, No. 4874, before the Lords' Committee on the burdens on real property. Compare the remarks on this subject in Sir R. Peel's speech in introducing the commercial measures of 1846. (27 Jan. 83 *Hansard* 270-6.)

proportion to his ability. Inasmuch as the contribution is in proportion, not to the entire sum of a person's means, but to that portion of them which consists in visible real property, it fulfils this condition but imperfectly. And this objection derives additional strength from the magnitude of the sum which is thus raised. There is no apparent reason why nearly L.11,000,000 sterling should be raised annually in the United Kingdom for the relief of destitution, the repression of crime, the maintenance of highways and bridges, the paving of streets, and the repair of churches, from the holders of real property, without any contribution from the holders of personal property. These, it is said, are purposes of general utility, to which fundholders, jointresses, rent-chargers, and persons having capital employed in banking, commerce, and shipping, as well as persons deriving an income from professional services, ought to contribute a proportional share.

This objection would be unanswerable, if the taxes in question were levied by the *general* government. No valid reason could exist why the entire national expenditure should be defrayed by taxes levied exclusively upon the occupiers of real property. The general government would naturally approximate, as nearly as possible, to a proportionate taxation of the means of each contributor, and would impose a tax on income or on all property indiscriminately. But a local rate cannot be levied on these principles.

In the first place, an assessment of the local rates, upon the principle of an *income tax*, may safely be pronounced impracticable. In order to render a permanent income tax possible, it must be levied on a large scale; the machinery must be skilful, under efficient control, and free from the suspicion of partiality. But the local rates are, for the most part, imposed and levied by unpaid officers, according to a very rude and simple process. Moreover, the rates are made by persons within the parish, whose exercise of such inquisitorial functions as an income tax demands, would be deeply resented; and who, even if really impartial, would certainly be suspected of partiality. The local rates are levied in small sums, and upon occupiers generally; the smallest tenements are liable to the rate, and are in many parishes rated. Who would undertake to make a fair estimate of the incomes of thousands of small shopkeepers, traders, and artisans, in a parish such as Marylebone, Lambeth, Liverpool, Manchester, or Birmingham? At present, all persons are exempted from the income tax whose incomes are less than L.150 a-year. For a general tax, such a rule is quite practicable; but for a local tax, it would be impossible, inasmuch as it would

often throw the entire burden of taxation upon a small minority of the inhabitants of the parish. It should be observed, further, that there is a good ground for the rule laid down by the Courts, that the property to be rated must be *local* and *visible*. When the proceeds of a tax are paid into the general Exchequer, the locality of the property is immaterial. But when the application of the tax is necessarily local, the situation of the property must be taken into account. The principle of the English law is, that every occupier of lands and houses within a parish, is rated for parochial purposes, in proportion to the annual value of those lands or houses. But if a parishioner was rated; not in proportion to his property within the parish, but to his income, the most extraordinary results would be produced. For example, if all the Banks in Lombard Street were rated in proportion, not to their value as houses, but to the income of the Banks, nearly the entire burdens of the parish would probably be defrayed by these few houses, and the rest of the parishioners would escape taxation. Besides, if a person has a large income arising from money vested in the native or foreign funds,—from an estate in the West Indies, or from a mercantile house in Canton,—on what principle is he to be taxed for the benefit of one English parish rather than another? It is true, that the Scotch law, which taxes *means and substance* to the poor's rate, upon the principle of an income tax, attempts to meet the difficulty just pointed out; but the experience of Scotland as to the operation of this mode of local taxation, does not, on account of the limited extent of the assessments, afford any presumption that it could be advantageously introduced into England. For these various reasons, we consider it altogether impossible to levy nine millions a-year in England as a parochial income tax.

If, however, it should be admitted to be impracticable to make the local rates fall equally on all classes of persons, by levying them on the principle of an income tax, it might nevertheless appear possible at least to make them a *property tax*; and so to include money invested in the funds, or real security, shares of companies, &c., as well as the stock of manufacturers, artisans, and farmers. A property tax is, doubtless, more practicable for the purposes of rating than an income tax; but it is nevertheless liable to many of the same objections. The rating of money invested is subject to the difficulty arising from its not being local, which has been already mentioned. Even the rating of a farmer's or trader's stock is, as Mr M'Culloch has shown,* by

* *Treatise on Taxation*, p. 114.

no means an easy task. On the subject of rating stock in trade, we have the benefit of experience to guide us. Although it was decided in 1707, that stock in trade was rateable, no general attempt to rate it was ever made. And when the rateability of stock in trade was solemnly re-affirmed by the Court of Queen's Bench in 1840, Parliament was forced immediately to interfere; and a bill exempting stock in trade from rating has been annually passed since that time.

From these considerations it seems to us to follow, that as long as the rates continue, as they now are, to be parochial taxes, they must be levied on visible property, locally situate within the parish; and that they cannot be assessed on the principle of an income or property tax. While the rates retain their local character, the unfairness, so far as it goes, of exempting personalty, and assessing them exclusively on real property, is inevitable. The local expenditure renders a local assessment necessary; and a local assessment must be limited to property which can be identified locally, and must omit money, which, according to the legal proverb, 'has no earmark.' It may be added, that even if personalty was rateable, the incidence of the local rates upon the different species of property would not be thereby rendered equal. So long as the rates were made by parishes, the burden would not be diffused equally over the whole country. The great masses of personal property are in the towns; and it would be no benefit to a rural parish in Hampshire, or Norfolk, or Cumberland, to know, that the merchants and bankers of London and Liverpool were rated to the poor's rate in proportion to their incomes.

In order, therefore, to tax personalty in equal proportions with real property, for the purposes now defrayed out of the local rates, it would be necessary to abandon the principle of local taxation; and to transfer all this expenditure (which for the United Kingdom may be taken at about 11,000,000 a-year) to the general taxes.

But if a general transfer of this sort was made, the principle of management, by independent local authorities, must at the same time be abandoned. If the general government defrays the expenses, it must control them. The liability to pay must be accompanied by the power of regulating the payment. A local tax, with exclusively central management, and a general tax with exclusively local management, are equally absurd. Mr Coppock, the experienced clerk to the Stockport Board of Guardians, who was examined by the Lords' Committee on local burdens, clearly perceived this consequence. He recommended that the entire expenses of the relief of the poor should

be transferred to the Treasury ; but he, at the same time, proposed a plan for abolishing the present local powers, and administering the relief by agents of the central government. We cannot, however, believe that this proposition, so subversive of all the principles upon which the relief of the poor has been always managed in this country, is likely to receive a serious consideration. We will only remark, in reference to it, that if the relief of the poor in England is made a charge upon the national taxation, the measure must be extended to the poor of Scotland and Ireland ; and that the relief of the poor of all parts of the United Kingdom must, if managed exclusively by the central government, be administered upon the same principles.

The discussions which have recently taken place upon the law of settlement, have brought into prominent notice the various evils which are produced by the forced removals of the poor ; and an opinion is gaining ground, that the only effectual remedy for these evils is to be found in the abolition of all settlement, accompanied by what is termed *a national rate*. By a national rate is meant a tax for the relief of the poor,—not levied by parishes, but imposed equally upon the community at large : it would therefore be equivalent to making the relief of the poor a charge upon the general taxation, and would involve that fundamental change in its administration to which we have above adverted.

An abolition of settlement does not necessarily imply a national rate ; although the two propositions are commonly associated, and treated as involving one another.* It would be possible to abolish settlements, and to confer on every poor person a right to relief in the parish where he resides, or where he is at the moment, without extinguishing the parochial liability. But if settlements were abolished, and parochial chargeability were retained, a dangerous power would be given to the poor, of congregating in

* In illustration of the above view, we may refer to a recent resolution of the Board of Guardians of the Walsingham Union, in Norfolk, a copy of which has been circulated in print :—‘ That it has become essentially necessary that the law of settlement should be done away with altogether, and that the maintenance of the poor should be national and not parochial ; and that as labour is the source of all value, and every description of property is made and supported by labour, every description of property should be rated for the maintenance of the poor.’ See also some similar resolutions of the Guardians of the Basford Union, in Nottinghamshire, printed in the *Justice of the Peace* for 5th December 1846.

bodies, and overwhelming single parishes by their applications. To render the abolition of settlements safe, it would be necessary to make the chargeability at least co-extensive with *unions*. We doubt, however, whether under any circumstances it would not be necessary, even for the protection and advantage of the poor themselves, to retain some settlement founded on residence, at least of a few months. Unless some such rule obtained, the different parishes and unions might vie with one another in giving inadequate relief, for the purpose of driving off the applicants. And thus a measure intended to promote the welfare, and diminish the sufferings of the poor, might end in producing a harsh treatment of the really destitute, and in increasing vagrancy with its attendant mischiefs.

A Parliamentary enquiry into the general operation of the English law of settlement, has been promised by the Government for next session. The subject is one of great complexity and difficulty, and public opinion does not hitherto appear to have fixed itself to any agreement, even upon some of the cardinal points. We trust that the investigation may be conducted with calmness, and in such a manner as to elucidate the question at issue, and to guide the fluctuating judgments of the public. We have, in the preceding remarks, sufficiently expressed our opinion as to the close connexion between a law of settlement, and the principle of local taxation, with respect to the relief of the poor; and we feel satisfied, that unless the present rating districts are considerably enlarged, an entire abolition of settlements and removals of the poor is a change which, however desirable it may be, cannot be safely ventured upon.

ART. IV.—*History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent.* By GEORGE BANCROFT. Ninth Edition. 8vo. Boston: 1841.

History of the Colonization of the United States. By GEORGE BANCROFT. Ninth Edition. 3 vols. 8vo. Boston: 1841.

THE double title-page, as above given, suggests an explanation of the general scheme of Mr Bancroft's History. 'I have,' he says, 'formed the design of writing a history of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent to the present time.' But the three volumes published together in 1841, form one complete work; and are what the second title-

page imports—a History of the Colonization by England of the countries now constituting the United States of America. In a notice at the end of the third volume, Mr Bancroft informs us, 'That this volume completes the History of the Colonization of the United States. In the arrangement of my subject, the great drama of their independence opens with the attempts of France and England to carry the peace of Aix la Chapelle into effect. Should the propriety of the point of time selected for the division be questioned, I will ask for the present a suspension of judgment.'

At this period, the thirteen colonies which afterwards declared and achieved their independence, were all firmly established. The forms of their colonial governments were determined, and the great difficulties which have always attended the first attempts to plant a colony had been happily overcome. The dominion of the metropolis appeared to be paramount and secure—and all struggles against her authority to have ended in a complete submission to her will. The colonial system was elaborately organized, and apparently securely established.

From this time a new order of things was to begin. A great nation had, in fact, been created by the labours of a century. The interference of that country, from which for the most part this new people had issued, now became irksome. All the dangers of colonization being overcome, the scattered offshoots from their great parent stem began to regard themselves as one people, having common interests, and common enemies; and among the chief of these last, to consider that distant and haughty metropolis whence they derived their being, their language, and their institutions. The results from this altered condition of their existence, form the subject of the second, and yet unfinished portion of Mr Bancroft's History: and he says—'If my labours thus far are accepted by my country, no higher reward can be hoped for, than to hear, from the favouring opinion of the people, the summons to go forward, and write the history of the American Revolution achieved by our fathers, not for themselves and their posterity only, but for the world.'

Important as that revolution must ever be considered, and exciting though it must naturally be to an American, still, the early struggles of the colonies for their very existence, is to the general reader the most interesting and suggestive portion of their history. The conquests of Mexico and Peru by the Spaniards, have indeed a species of marvel and romance attending them, to which the progress of the English upon the more northern portions of the continent offers nothing similar; nevertheless, a far more sustained and a wider interest belongs to the early

fortunes of our countrymen in those inhospitable regions. A blaze of renown surrounded Cortés, and his inferior cotemporary and countryman Pizarro. Enormous wealth at once flowed into the coffers of the Spanish monarch; a vast and fertile territory was quickly added to his dominions; and Spaniards, with their language and their religion, peopled the wide regions which extend from California almost to the southernmost point of South America. But a dark night succeeded this dazzling dawn. Political and religious despotism settled down upon the land—rendering the people unfit to govern themselves, and incapable of a steady obedience to any one else. The great power of Spain, and the great interest felt in the colonies, both by her Kings and by the Nation at large, gave an extraordinary impetus to the peopling of their new possessions in America. Cities arose, magnificent, rich, and for a time thronging with inhabitants, and busy with trade. Splendour and wealth and power attended the fortunate possessors of lands teeming with all the products of an exquisite climate. Convents, churches, and palaces were built which vied with, if they did not surpass, those of Spain herself. And it seemed as if the Spanish dominion would soon extend from Cape Horn to the North Pole, and give her an overwhelming preponderance not only in America, but the world. But this brilliant and showy system contained within itself a fatal taint,—a certain cause of early and of rapid decline. This deadly disease lurked in the institutions which Spain established in her colonial dominions: it not only destroyed her colonial greatness, but sapped the foundations of her European power; and reduced her, from the towering supremacy which once threatened the whole of Europe as well as America, to that abject and powerless condition which she now exhibits.

The progress of the English colonies affords a striking contrast to all this sudden splendour and rapid decay. Their early struggles, and petty wars, were not for extensive power and almost countless wealth. They landed on a dreary shore, to brave the rigours of a most inhospitable climate, to combat savages as fierce as the clime, and more numerous than the intruders; to wring from a niggard soil a scanty existence, and to win a narrow footing for their humble homes, not only without the aid, but almost in direct opposition to the wishes, of the government of their native country. But these hardy and daring colonists brought with them that which was of greater value than the almost fabulous wealth of Mexico and Peru—the habit of self-government, and submissive obedience to the omnipotence of the Law;—attesting, with more authority than the most laborious antiquarian arguments, the ancient date of liberal

institutions in the land that gave them birth. Happily for America, the Kings of England, and the government, took little interest in the early fortunes of the colonies, and therefore did not, at the outset, interfere with the settlements formed by our countrymen. The reigning feelings in England, however, naturally put their stamp and impress on the institutions which were formed. The character of Englishmen determined the nature of the law and government established, and their self-relying and undaunted spirit was strongly manifest in every colony which they planted in America.

The great renown of Columbus (a renown indeed richly deserved) has obscured the history of the first discoverers of the American Continent; and the romantic exploits of the Spanish captains have so occupied the attention of mankind, that the equally daring, though not equally successful deeds of the English adventurers are comparatively unknown. England, nevertheless, which has given a people to the northern continent of America, and spread her language over it, sent forth Cabot, who was its first discoverer. 'In the new career of western adventure,' says Mr Bancroft, 'the American continent was first discovered under the auspices of the English, and the coast of the United States by a native of England. In the history of maritime enterprise in the New World, the achievements of John and Sebastian Cabot are, in boldness, success, and results, second only to those of Columbus.—(p. 7.) * * * 'Yet the Cabots derived little benefit from the expedition which their genius had suggested, and of which they alone defrayed the expense. Posterity hardly remembered, that they had reached the American continent nearly fourteen months before Columbus, on his third voyage, came in sight of the main land; and almost two years before Amerigo Vespucci sailed west of the Canaries. But England acquired, through their energy, such a right to North America as this indisputable priority could confer. Henry VII. and his successors recognised the claims of Spain and Portugal, only so far as they actually occupied the territories to which they laid pretension; and at a later day, the English parliament and the English courts derided a title, founded not upon occupancy, but upon a grant from the Roman Pontiff.'—(Vol. i. p. 10.)

This discovery of the continent of America occurred in June 1497; and in the latitude of fifty-six degrees north. In a second voyage, undertaken in the subsequent year, 1498, John Cabot and his son, Sebastian, sailed down the coast to a latitude which by Mr Bancroft is supposed to be probably as low as Albemarle Sound, and corresponding with that of Gibraltar. One great

purpose of this voyage was to ascertain 'what manner of landes those Indies were to inhabit.'—A circumstance the more remarkable, as to plant colonies was not the ordinary purpose of discovery in those days. The first object proposed by Columbus, was to discover a western route to India, and for a long period every subsequent navigator strove to attain it. The extraordinary wealth of Mexico and Peru, however, gave a new direction to the wild spirit of adventure then prevalent among all the great nations of Europe. Gold and silver were now the things sought by every sanguine adventurer, and no lands were deemed worthy of consideration, which did not supply these precious metals. In search of them, one adventurer after another roamed along the coasts, and over the immense territories of the continent, until subjects of different kingdoms had wandered from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Florida, and as far westward as the Missouri. Various nations laid claim to the same lands, each supposing, or at least asserting itself to be the original discoverer. For many years, the only result—the evil of which has continued to the present time—was an inextricable confusion, and complication of rights, the fruitful source of disputation and strife.

To France is due the honour of having been the first nation to form a comprehensive system of colonization in North America; and that, too, before the extravagant hopes respecting gold and silver had, by constant disappointment, been driven from men's minds. It is a curious fact, suggesting many interesting and important subjects for consideration and inquiry; that, in both hemispheres—in Hindostan and in America—France has preceded England with a great and systematic scheme of acquiring power and territory, and that, in both cases, her superior political forethought has been defeated. This result, also, is the more extraordinary, from the acknowledged superiority of French over Englishmen in so dealing with the natives of both regions, as to make them subservient to their preconceived plan of aggrandisement. In the reign of Francis the First of France, (1534,) Jacques Cartier,* having discovered the great river St Lawrence, proposed a plan for the colonization of the country. It was supposed that a country lying in the latitude of the most southern part of France, would be blessed like it with a genial climate; and so sanguine were the hopes raised by the discoveries of Cartier, that the King issued a commission for the formation of a colony, and provided three well-furnished

* A plan for colonizing in North America was, indeed, proposed so early as 1518, by De Lery and St Just; but nothing seems to have been done in furtherance of it.—(*Mr Bancroft's Hist.*, Vol. i. p. 15—n. 6.)

ships to carry out the emigrants—amongst whom were to be found young nobles who volunteered their services to establish a New France in the happy regions discovered by their adventurous countrymen. In this case, as in so many others, the hopes of the earliest settlers were cruelly disappointed. But the plan of establishing a colony was persevered in; and many years before any attempt was made by Englishmen to establish a settlement in America, the permanent foundations of many colonies were laid by France; all of which were included under the general name of La Nouvelle France, and one large portion of which has since received the name of Canada. In remarkable contrast to all that occurred in the early settlements of the English, the monarch, the court, the nobles, and the priesthood, manifested a marked interest in the fortunes of those who were thus endeavouring to extend the dominions of their country. We do not by this mean to assert, that the English government and monarchs of those days manifested no cupidity for the gold and silver which every part of the American continent was supposed to contain; for, in truth, they exhibited no small desire for immediate and extravagant gain; but for all else they cared nothing. They evidently had conceived no plan for an extensive system of colonization, the object of which was to extend the name and language and relations of the mother country—to create new marts for her trade, and an outlet for her superabundant population. In the instance of Raleigh a sort of countenance was afforded, which arose partly from romance, and partly from a hope of amassing great store of gold and silver. But the romance soon died away, and the gold and silver never were discovered. From the first, the colonies of England have struggled into existence beset by danger and distress. They were created by, and in turn created, stout hands and brave hearts. The early and dangerous efforts of the colonists have left their impress on the character of the people; and that bold, adventurous, yet wary spirit, which enabled them to create an Empire, has been left as a legacy to their multitudinous progeny, who seem indeed destined indefinitely to extend it.

The colonization of the thirteen provinces which eventually became the United States of America, was begun, in fact, in the year 1584, by Raleigh, (Virginia being the first English colony;) and it may, as far as England is concerned, be deemed to have been ended by Oglethorpe, who, in the reign of George II., and in the year 1732, established, by power of a charter from the King, the colony of Georgia, and placed it for twenty-one years 'under the guardianship of a corporation in trust for the poor.'—(Vol. iii. p. 419.)

Within the period of time which elapsed between these two epochs, is comprised the history of the colonization of the United States. Of the colonies thus planted, two stand out as prominent figures in this imposing picture. From the first moment of their existence to the present time, these two provinces have exercised an extraordinary and dissimilar influence upon the character of the whole *united* colonies; and if we desire to understand the history of this people, we must be thoroughly conversant with the fortunes of Virginia on the one hand, and New England on the other.

Virginia, originally a vast and almost undefined territory, was at various periods curtailed of its proportions, and came at last to signify the one, and, compared with its alienated territory, the small state or province denominated Virginia; while out of the extensive tracts subtracted from its dominion, various other states have been successively established. These states having no peculiar bond of union, formed each a distinct and separate integer in the union which afterwards took place. But the fortunes of New England were entirely different. That name is applied to provinces which, though separate as colonies, and as independent states, have still from their infancy been united by a union moral and political. The character of the people is the same; the circumstances which called them separately into existence were of a nature to make them for many purposes a united body; and these circumstances, which in reality form the romance of their history, have given a peculiar and distinctive character to the people, and have endowed them with an extraordinary influence over the destinies of all the states with whom they have entered into confederacy. To the most casual observer, it must be evident that the leaven of the New England states has 'leavened the whole lump;' and out of a mass of very heterogeneous elements, has formed a singularly homogeneous people. Had the fanaticism of the New England Puritans never existed, it may safely be asserted, that the *United States* would not have been called into being.

Virginia was established by a set of daring, enthusiastic, and even chivalrous adventurers. The character of the people was affected by that of their great leader; and to this hour, the spirit of Raleigh seems to hover over the country to which his perseverance and adventure first led the way, and gave a name.

Maryland strange to say, a Catholic province, might be deemed the chosen birth-place of perfect religious tolerance. The kindly nature of Calvert, (Lord Baltimore,) 'far from guarding his territory against any but those of his persuasion, as he had taken from himself and his successors all arbitrary

'power by establishing the legislative franchises of the people, 'so he took from them the means of being intolerant in religion 'by securing to all present and future liege people of the 'English king, without distinction of sect or party, free leave 'to transport themselves and their families to Maryland. 'Christianity was by the Charter made the law of the land, but 'no preference was given to any sect; and equality of religious 'rights, not less than in civil freedom, was insured.'—(Vol. i. p. 243.)

Massachusetts in like manner was the offspring of religious enthusiasm; but, while the Catholic sought a safe home for himself in the wilderness, and gave shelter to all others, of whatsoever creed, who wished for a quiet haven—the Puritan, fleeing also from oppression, withdrew himself from the *corrupt* communion of all churches but his own—made his own will the paramount law, and laid the foundations of what he termed a 'perfect republic.'

In curious contrast with the institutions established by the people in Massachusetts, and in Maryland by the kind-hearted Lord Baltimore, were those of the succeeding colony of Carolina. 'Massachusetts and Carolina were both colonized,' says Mr Bancroft, 'under proprietary charters, and of both, the charters 'were subverted; but while the proprietaries of the former were 'emigrants themselves, united by the love of religious liberty, 'the proprietaries of the latter were a company of English 'courtiers, combined for the purpose of a vast speculation in 'lands. The government established in Massachusetts was 'essentially popular, and was the growth of the soil; the constitution of Carolina was invented in England. Massachusetts 'was originally colonized by a feeble band of suffering yet 'resolute exiles, and its institutions were the natural result 'of the good sense and instinct for liberty of an agricultural 'people; Carolina was settled under the auspices of the 'wealthiest and most influential nobility, and its fundamental 'laws were framed with forethought by the most sagacious 'politician [Shaftesbury,] and the most profound philosopher. '[Locke,] of England. The King, through an obsequious judiciary, annulled the government of Massachusetts; the colonists 'repudiated the constitutions of Carolina. The principles of the 'former possessed an inherent vitality, which nothing has yet 'been able to destroy; the frame of the latter, as it disappeared, 'left no trace of its transitory existence, except in the institutions which sprung from its decay.'—(Vol. ii. p. 129.)

Still further to heighten the apparent discord among the materials, which were in after days to unite into one formidable

people, the next group of colonies were originally settled by foreigners. The Dutch West India Company acquired possession of an immense tract of territory in the centre of the seaboard of the continent—and the colony of New Netherlands, out of which were carved New Jersey, Delaware, and New York, was the offspring of this commercial corporation. The people of Sweden also contributed their quota to this heterogeneous combination.

‘The first permanent colonization of the banks of the Delaware is due to Oxenstiern.

‘Yet more than four years passed away before the design was carried into effect. We have seen Minuits, the first governor of New Amsterdam, forfeit his place amidst the strifes of faction. He now offered the benefit of his experience to the Swedes, and leaving Sweden probably near the close of the year 1637, he sailed to the Bay of Delaware. Two vessels, the *Key of Calmar* and the *Griffin*, formed his whole fleet; the care of the Swedish government provided the emigrants with a religious teacher, with provisions, and merchandise to traffic with the natives. Early in the year 1638, the little company of Swedes and Finns arrived in the Delaware Bay; the lands of the southern cape, which the emigrants from hyperborean regions named *Paradise Point*, to the falls in the river near Trenton, were purchased of the natives; and near the mouth of Christian Creek, within the limits of the present state of Delaware, *Christina Fort*, so called from the little girl who was then Queen of Sweden, was erected. Delaware was colonized.’—(Vol. ii. p. 287.)

Next came Penn, laying the foundations of Pennsylvania, upon the quaker doctrines of morality and religion.

‘Meantime, the news spread abroad, that William Penn the quaker had opened an asylum to the good and the oppressed of every nation, and humanity went through Europe, gathering the children of misfortune. From England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and the Low Countries, emigrants crowded to the land of promise. On the banks of the Rhine, it was whispered that the plans of Gustavus Adolphus and Oxenstiern were consummated; new companies were formed under better auspices than those of the Swedes; and from the highlands above Worms, the humble people who had melted at the eloquence of Penn, the quaker emissary, renounced their German homes for the protection of the quaker King. There is nothing in the history of the human race like the confidence which the simple virtues and institutions of William Penn inspired. The progress of his province was more rapid than the

‘progress of New England. “In August 1683, Philadelphia consisted of three or four little cottages;” the conies were yet undisturbed in their hereditary burrows; the deer fearlessly bounded past blazed trees, unconscious of foreboded streets; the stranger that wandered from the river banks, was lost in the thickets of the interminable forest; and two years afterwards, the place contained about six hundred houses, and the school-master and the printing-press had begun their work. In three years from its foundation, Philadelphia gained more than New York had done in half a century. This was the happiest season in the public life of William Penn. “I must without vanity say”—such was his honest exultation—“I have led the greatest colony into America that ever any man did upon a private credit, and the most prosperous beginnings that ever were in it, are to be found among us.”—(Vol. ii. p. 394.)

Pennsylvania was the twelfth colony; and when Oglethorpe, towards the middle of the next century, founded that of Georgia, the celebrated thirteen provinces, which in a few years were to proclaim themselves independent as the United States of America, were permanently established.

To any observer who considers the peculiar character, and apparently hostile nature, of these various communities, their subsequent close union must be matter of astonishment. And we are naturally led to inquire into the remarkable circumstances which created, and maintained through great perils, their voluntary association. The explanation of this phenomenon is to be found in their early history—and it appears to have been Mr Bancroft's purpose, by a careful, accurate, and copious narrative of the strange fortunes which attended the creation of these infant states, to supply to his country and the world the solution of the problem here proposed. To say that he has done this without being subject to the prepossessions and even prejudices of his countrymen, would not be the truth—and would, in fact, be hardly a compliment. Mr Bancroft is a zealous republican—and belongs, moreover, to that class of politicians who are in America denominated the Democratic Party. He is proud of his country, jealous of her fame, (too jealous sometimes,) and exulting, when he contemplates her future destiny. He writes, therefore, with an earnest purpose, and strong feelings—but also with a kindness and generosity, which win favour for the writer, as well as faith for his History. A citizen of Massachusetts, he has produced a work which may be taken as an accurate, and it is certainly a pleasing, exhibition of the tone of feeling now prevalent among the leading minds of New England. The fierce old Puritan spirit has there been refined and sublimated by

the principles to which, while resisting the mother country, the people of New-England were obliged to appeal. Single-handed, they had no chance of success in a struggle with England. But before they could hope to form alliance with, and receive aid from any of their colonial brethren, it was necessary for them to cast off the intolerance and bigotry which their ancestors had brought with them from their native land. Calamity too, and danger, and all the many severe trials which attended the early settlement of their barren country, tended much to soften the asperity of the Puritan's character. Wise and generous principles of civil and religious liberty, by degrees subverted the stern dogmas of the ancient faith. Unrestrained discussion led to the dissemination of doctrines of the most extended benevolence; till at length the prevalent tone—that which may indeed be considered the fashion of New England, and of its literature—is one of gentleness and peace, and brotherly love. In their Law, this kindly spirit is evinced, by enactments founded on the widest and most confiding principles of tolerance and liberality. But in their Literature, still in its infancy, it manifests itself in a species of exaggerated sentimentality, which imparts an air of weakness and almost effeminacy to most of the productions even of those who are deservedly honoured as their chief writers, philosophers, and statesmen. Their enthusiasm loves a stilted and affected phrase—their eloquence is florid unto weakness—and their style is not often, we may indeed say never, distinguished by that severe and masculine taste which always attends great thoughts, and which alone befits a great people.

To an English reader, this work, however, will recommend itself, not merely by the kindly spirit which pervades it, but also by the novelty of much of the information it contains, and by the manner in which that information is conveyed.

The circumstances which attended the formation of each separate colony are, to that colony, matters of the greatest interest, and the subject of most earnest research. In the mighty turmoil of our greater world these events passed almost unheeded, and were soon forgotten. While the foundations of Virginia and Massachusetts were laying, the great revolution of 1640 was preparing. The restoration of the Stuarts, and all the grievous consequences of that great change, left the people of England little time or inclination to watch the progress of the disputes which occurred among the emigrants in America; or even to notice the wars which they waged with the rival colonies of Holland and Sweden. The state of Rhode Island might receive its remarkable charter from the profligate Charles—Pennsylvania take laws from its benevolent founder—Locke and Shaftes-

bury might indulge in their experiments at legislation for Carolina; but the people of this country regarded them not. Time went on; and, amongst us, the struggles, distress, and eventual success of these colonies, were unknown. Neglect, happy in its consequences, was for many years their portion. At length it was found that a great people, 'bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh,' had risen up in America. How this had happened we knew not—cared not: their present worth was all we sought to know—their past fortunes we were content should be consigned to oblivion. The colonists, however, regarded their early history with very different feelings. They look back with reverence and love to the memory of those who led their forefathers to the wilderness. The stories of their great deeds—of their valour, patience, and wisdom, are sacred legends for their descendants—carefully stored up in the recollections of each succeeding generation—dwelt upon with rapture, and related to their children with enthusiastic veneration. The condition of the United States of America with respect to their history is peculiar. Every portion of it is authentic. The origin of most of the nations of the earth is enveloped in obscurity—a mythic narrative has supplied the place of authentic story. The imagination of successive, and more polished ages, has been employed in weaving that web of fiction with which the vanity of every people has sought to piece out the past. To exalt, adorn, and to believe these fictions, has usually become a portion of the national religion. The less there was known, the greater was the scope for the skill of the poet, and the art of the priest. The mythic heroes became patterns of virtue—after the fashion of their people—exaggerated models of national excellence. Thus, the very obscurity of a nation's origin contributed to exalt and refine its character. To this species of influence, whether for good or evil, the national character of the American people has never been subjected. Leaving a civilized nation, they carried with them all the means and appliances of the highest civilization the world then knew; and among these the printing-press, to which very early they gave perfect freedom. Every step of their progress has been recorded, and is known. The leaders of their various emigrations are no fabulous demigods, endowed with virtue and skill at the will of the rhapsodist and character. What faults they had have been severely noted; the good they did has not been interred with their bones, but lives recorded in the recollections of a grateful people. In truth, the race of men who thus went forth to found a great Empire, were many of them well worthy of a nation's love; and England, who gave them birth, who bred, nourished, and educated them,

may take an honest pride in the influence which their memory still exercises over the many millions who now swarm throughout the vast regions of America. If we wish to read the history of America with profit, and to derive from it the many valuable lessons which it can impart, we must school ourselves to view it in this spirit. We must check the risings of our hurt pride, and subdue the angry feelings generated by the unfortunate conflict with our colonies. We should endeavour to read with American as well as English feelings. The history is a history of English colonization. Our mission as the founders of Empires is far from being yet fulfilled. Africa, a large part of America, and the whole of Australasia, not to speak of the vast islands of the Indian seas, are destined to receive a new people, language, religion, arts, and literature, from England. Our first great experiment was made in America. The story of our doings there is a wonderful, endless series of instructive lessons, much needed by ourselves and our rulers. A century of experiments included nearly every possible scheme which can be devised for the establishment of a colony. Every mistake was committed—every right method was eventually hit upon—and we have only carefully to study the progress of each colony, to watch steadily the working of each scheme as it was devised and acted on, and we shall be able to deduce a never-erring code for our conduct; both as a nation colonizing and as colonists, from the frequent examples furnished by American history.

The provinces which were most distinguished for their success, and which ultimately took the lead in uniting the colonies, and maintaining the confederacy when formed, were Virginia in the south, and Massachusetts, together with the New England states generally, in the north. These two states, however, were established on very opposite principles, and had consequently to struggle against very dissimilar obstacles.

Though the colonization of Virginia may be truly ascribed to Raleigh's adventurous and persevering spirit, yet his efforts to found a colony proved for the most part disastrous. From the first discovery of the continent of America in the reign of Henry VII. down to the reign of James I., many, and even contradictory PATENTS had, by the successive Monarchs, been granted to various persons, aptly termed adventurers. Attempt after attempt followed to turn these grants to profit; but up to the year 1606 they all signally failed, bringing distress, ruin, and oftentimes destruction, upon the daring but inexperienced adventurers. In this year, at the solicitation of men of great wealth and influence, James granted to a company of merchants and persons of high rank, leave to deduce a colony into

'Virginia,' and to that end issued a patent ample in power and in territory. This 'first colonist charter,' as it is termed by Mr Bancroft, naturally excites great interest in the mind of the historian, and as naturally is subject to his severe animadversion. James was, indeed, amazingly tickled with the idea of becoming a legislator for a new people; and in the formation of a code for the government of the future province, he displayed the narrow bigotry and vehement despotism of his character. He assumed to be the possessor and King, by right of discovery, of the whole of such parts of the continent as were not actually occupied by the colonies of other nations. And in furtherance of this right, he created two rival companies, and gave to each a territory larger than the great kingdoms of Europe.

A belt of twelve degrees on the American coast, embracing the soil from Cape Fear to Halifax, excepting perhaps the little spot in Acadia then actually possessed by the French, was set apart to be colonized by two rival companies. Of these, the first was composed of noblemen, gentlemen, and merchants, in and about London; the second, of knights, gentlemen, and merchants, in the west. The London adventurers, who alone succeeded, had an exclusive right to occupy the regions from thirty-four to thirty-eight degrees of north latitude, that is from Cape Fear to the southern limit of Maryland; the western men had equally an exclusive right to plant between forty-one and forty-five degrees. The intermediate district, from thirty-eight to forty-one degrees, was open to the competition of both companies. — (Vol. i. p. 121.)

The company held of the King by homage and rent—and in return was endowed with certain extraordinary powers as proprietors of the soil; but the whole, or nearly the whole, political administration was centred nominally in the King. He appointed and dismissed at pleasure a controlling council sitting in London, as well as a council for each colony, which should reside within its limits. Every political power was thus reserved to the Monarch. 'Thus,' exclaims Mr Bancroft, with an astonishment not wonderful in an American of the present day—'Thus the first written charter of a permanent American colony, which was to be the chosen abode of liberty, gave to the mercantile corporation nothing but a desert territory, with the right of peopling and defending it, and reserved to the monarch absolute legislative authority, the control of all appointments, and a hope of ultimate revenue. To the emigrants themselves it conceded not one elective franchise, not one of the rights of self-government. They were subjected to the ordinances of a commercial corporation, of which they could not be members; to the domi-

'nion of a domestic council, in appointing which they had no voice; to the control of a superior council in England which had no sympathies with their right, and finally, to the arbitrary legislation of the sovereign. Yet, bad as was the system, the reservation of power to the king, a result of his vanity, rather than of his ambition, had, at least, the advantage of mitigating the action of the commercial corporation. The check would have been complete, had the powers of appointment and legislation been given to the people of Virginia.'—(Vol. i. p. 122.)

The struggles that followed on the settlement of the colony, had for their end the attainment, by the people, of all the powers reserved to the King and Company—but to the end of their colonial existence the claims of the Virginian colonists went no further. A sentimental loyalty to England, a love of her, as *home*, was ever evinced by them; they complained of her commercial monopoly; they liked not, and they opposed, the powers of the proprietary; and they soon adopted a system of self-government, in accordance with the prevailing opinions in England and America. But they never assumed to be an independent people, owning, indeed, allegiance to the crown of England, but none to parliament—none to England herself. The form of society in Virginia tended entirely to aristocratic power and distinction. The great possessions of a small number of landed proprietors induced them to imitate the nobles of England—with them they wished to be on an equality—but they viewed with sentiments of very vehement dislike the levelling doctrines of the Puritans of the north. A jovial, profuse, and ostentatious people, it required a long course of folly and despotism on the part of the English parliament to wean them from the attachment to home; and to unite them with the grave, religious, starched, thrifty, and grasping New Englanders. These latter, from the very beginning of their colonial existence, laid claim to national independence; and, for a time, the prevalent doctrines in England itself fostered this bold spirit, and made the desire to escape from English dominion, the leading sentiment in the minds of the New England colonists.

The changing fortunes of the great English parties had always an immediate and marked influence upon the colonists in America; and a curious instance of this is afforded by the uses to which the company of adventurers in London, and their meetings, were turned by the patriotic party. The discussions which took place respecting the government of their settlements, became a means of calling in question the prerogatives to which King James laid claim. Under the guise of providing for the well-being of their colonists, they assaulted the powers of the

Monarch in England, and sought to establish the most liberal doctrines for the government of their own country, upon the ruins of the dominion which he endeavoured to maintain in America. The legislative authority reserved by the King was openly avowed to be illegal; and the right of the colonists to be deemed English subjects was asserted to be inherent in them—of which, in fact, they could not be deprived by an act of prerogative—and for the full enjoyment of which they were in no measure indebted to the royal liberality, but solely to the law alone. The progress of the Reformation also singularly advanced the cause of the colonists. All the old foundations of the law were called in question by those who claimed a liberty of conscience; and lax notions on the subject of allegiance became extensively prevalent. To those who deemed religion, and religious belief, the one absorbing and paramount business of life, the doctrines of the law on this head appeared entirely a subservient and secondary consideration. They assumed, that the doctrine which declared allegiance to be indelible was false as well as mischievous. The rights of conscience they considered to overrule the prerogative of the Crown. If those rights were invaded, they believed they could solemnly withdraw from subjection to that power which was guilty of the invasion, and from community with that people which permitted the encroachment. This, in a few words, was the received doctrine among the godly of New England—that which was, in fact, never forgotten—though not always, from characteristic caution, openly avowed. During the Protectorate, the New England colonies were favoured brethren, who were allowed to make for themselves what laws, and pursue what conduct, best pleased them. They, deeming their dominion the reign of the saints on the earth, assumed infallibility; and, with a fiery zeal, sought to extirpate error by the sword and by the fagot. They revelled in the thought of their own irresponsibility; gravely declared themselves an independent people; and prepared to resist, by every means in their power, the enforcement of the law which declared them subject to the Parliament of England.—(Vol. i. p. 440.) This is admitted by Mr Bancroft, though not with the frankness which such a subject demanded. He says, ‘The history of Massachusetts is the counterpart to that of Virginia; the latter obtained its greatest liberty by the abrogation of the charter of its company; the former by a transfer of its charter, and a daring construction of its powers, by the successors of the original patentees.’—(Vol. i. p. 345.)

What is meant by this transfer and daring construction, appears in the subsequent story of the company. ‘On the sug-

'gestion of the generous Matthew Cradock, the governor of the company, it was proposed that the charter should be transferred to those of the freemen who should themselves inhabit the colony; and the question immediately became the most important that could be debated. An agreement was at once formed at Cambridge, in England, between men of fortune and education, that they would themselves embark for America, if, before the last of September, the whole government should be *legally* transferred to them and the other freemen of the company who should inhabit the plantation. * * * Two days after the contract had been executed, the subject was again brought before the court. A serious debate ensued the next day, when it was fully, and with general consent, declared, that the government and the patent should be transferred beyond the Atlantic, and settled in New England.

'This vote was simply a decision of the question—Where the future meetings of the company should be held? and yet it effectually changed a commercial corporation into an independent provincial government.'—(Vol. i. p. 352-3.)

In other words, a power not granted was illegally usurped; and the bold spirit which dictated the proceeding, continued ever after to be manifest in the conduct of Massachusetts. The first band of settlers who went out under the charter, seized upon two ministers of the name of Browne, who professed Episcopal doctrines; they were treated as if they had been criminals, and were ignominiously sent back to England. Mr Bancroft makes hereupon this somewhat extraordinary remark—'They (the Brownes) were banished from Salem because they were churchmen. Thus was Episcopacy first professed in Massachusetts, and thus was it exiled. The blessings of the promised land were to be kept for Puritan dissenters.' It is difficult to ascertain whether Mr Bancroft here indulges in a bitter sneer at his brethren, or whether he adopts their language, and seriously believes it an exculpation. The intolerance of the Puritans is evidently a stumbling-block in his way. His reason and better nature revolt against the atrocities he describes; but the narrow prejudices of his people interfere with his judgment, and induce him to frame an unsatisfactory apology for a tyranny which, when exercised *against* his favourites, he visits with an honest and vehement indignation.

The Puritan who, in Europe, had suffered under persecution, did not blame his oppressors because they were persecutors. What he complained of was, that they, in his person, persecuted the truth. He, in his turn, was ready with the rod of the magistrate to punish dissent—because such dissent was error. The

true principles of religious toleration were utterly repudiated by him. 'God forbid,' said Dudley, one of their most esteemed leaders, 'our love for the truth should be grown so cold that we 'should tolerate errors.' Cotton, a shining light among his brethren, exclaimed, 'better tolerate hypocrites and tares, than 'thorns and briars.' 'Polypiety,' cried out another of these reverend men, 'is the greatest impiety in the world. To say 'that men ought to have liberty of conscience, is impious ignorance.' 'Religion,' said another, 'has no eccentric motions.' This was the open, honest avowal of the doctrines on which they were prepared to act—and in accordance with which they did act. They declared Massachusetts to be 'a perfect republic.' Open dissent was banished from the province, and visited with the punishment of death if the dissenter ventured to return; and men and women were, under this atrocious law, banished, whipt, and executed! Mr Bancroft condescends, not indeed directly to defend, but to extenuate the enactment. He declares that the act admits of no defence; and then, with an astonishing inconsistency, proceeds by a sophistical argument to justify the deed on the plea of necessity, and to extenuate its horrors, by showing that the powers of Europe have been equally guilty. Thus the impartiality of the historian is lost in the zeal of the advocate. In truth, Mr Bancroft's zeal has in this case most signally outrun his discretion and judgment. By attempting to prove that the institutions of America, from the first, were faultless, and her people impeccable, distrust is inevitably raised in the mind of every judicious reader; and the important benefit is lost, which might have been derived from a philosophic explanation of the manner in which the character and institutions of a remarkable people were gradually developed and moulded into that form which they have at length attained. The remarkable phenomenon in the matter before us, is the present tolerance of difference in religious belief, manifested both by the laws and the manners of America; as compared with that iron bigotry with which they started in their career. The duty of a mere chronicler is merely truly to narrate the facts which constitute his history; that of the philosophic historian—and to that character Mr Bancroft aspires—is to search for, and to explain the hidden causes of the remarkable change which took place. To deny the first step in the narration, to repel the statement of intolerance as a 'calumny,' and to assert that the people of New England were from the first as forbearing in the case of religious belief, as by the law of the United States* we may presume them to be at

* Judging by some late proceedings towards Catholics in New

present, may find favour with the zealots of his own country, but will assuredly, before the tribunal of the world at large, throw discredit upon his labours, and distrust upon his evidence.

The declaration of the leaders of the Massachusetts colony, as to the nature of their allegiance, is a signal event in the history of the colonies. In it, we can perceive the germ of that independence, which they in after years successfully demanded. The people of the majority of the colonies, never thought of, never desired to be an independent people. They were driven by an invincible necessity to fight for independence, in the end; and they reluctantly yielded obedience to its hard decree. But the proud Puritan, when he shook the dust from his feet, and bade adieu to his native land, determined at the same time to shake off his allegiance also. The feelings of nature might for an instant sway his stern spirit—and as he saw the shores of his birth-place sink into the sea, in the agony and tenderness of the moment he might exclaim, FAREWELL, DEAR ENGLAND! But as he turned him to the west, and looked towards the future, the past with all its regrets, its ties, and its gentle recollections, was swept from his heart. He was excited by the hope of building up a perfect church—a fiery zeal for the maintenance and extension of his own opinions, which he arrogantly deemed the only soul-saving truth, occupied his whole mind, and supplied the place of home and friends and family. ‘I shall call that my ‘country,’ wrote John Winthrop, one of the founders of Massachusetts, to his father, ‘where I may most glorify God, and ‘enjoy the presence of my dearest friends.’ And when, having arrived in America, sickness and death and misery were all around him, he wrote to his wife, whom, on account of her pregnancy, he had left in England—‘We here enjoy God and ‘Jesus Christ, and is not this enough? I thank God, I like so ‘well to be here, as I do not repent my coming. I would not ‘have altered my course, though I had foreseen all these afflictions. I never had more content of mind.’ The stern fanaticism which dictated this language, was not likely to be checked in its course by the comparatively feeble ties of national allegiance. It was soon proposed ‘to form a peculiar government,’ and in their current jargon, to colonize the ‘BEST’—meaning those who agreed with them. These proceedings, however, attracted the

England, we fear the spirit of intolerance is not wholly departed from the minds of the people. It is to be hoped, however, that this was but a transient ebullition of holy zeal, and that the thorough feeling of tolerance evinced by all the leading minds of America, will keep down and extinguish every contrary tendency.

attention of the English Government, and brought down upon the colonists Laud with a *Quo warranto*? A lucky death cut short the legal proceedings, and in the convulsions which immediately followed in England, the colony was for a time forgotten. When the Parliament had conquered the King, it sought to extend its power to the colonies, and began to question the validity of the Massachusetts charter. The colonists determined to resist the Parliament, as the Parliament had resisted the King. Their general court met in November 1648, to deliberate upon what they were pleased to call, the usurpations of Parliament; and having expelled one deputy because he was faithless, that is, of opinion opposite to their own, they deliberated with closed doors, 'on the nature of the relation with England'—and then agreed, 'that Massachusetts owed to England the same allegiance as the free Hanse Towns had rendered to the empire; as Normandy, when its dukes were Kings of England, had paid to the monarchs of France.' And they resolved to accept no new charter from the Parliament, because that would imply a surrender of the old. The court next addressed Parliament to the same effect; and Edward Winslow, the agent for Massachusetts in England, publicly denied that the jurisdiction of Parliament extended to America. 'If the parliament of England should impose laws upon us,' he said, 'having no burgesses in the House of Commons nor capable of a summons, by reason of the vast distance, we should lose the liberties and freedom of English indeed.' The Parliament evaded the difficulty, by an ambiguous answer—which, if circumstances had allowed, would most probably have been interpreted, so as to let in their supreme dominion. Mr Bancroft says the Parliament magnanimously (we should say cunningly) replied—'We encourage no appeals from your justice. We leave you all the freedom and latitude that may in any respect be duly claimed by you.'*—(Vol. i. p. 443.)

After the Restoration the question of English supremacy was again mooted: the struggles of the colony with Charles II. and his brother James, plainly prove Massachusetts to have been, in fact, the birth-place of American independence. In 1671, Charles said to the privy council, there is fear of their breaking from all dependence on this nation; and it was afterwards by the council declared, 'that they (the people of Massachusetts) were a

* The transatlantic Puritans found favour in the eyes of Cromwell—who, when he had conquered Ireland, offered the New England people estates, and a settlement in that island. The offer was declined by them, because they thought 'their own government the happiest and wisest this day in the world.'—Vol. i. p. 444.

'people almost upon the brink of renouncing any dependence upon the crown.' Mr Bancroft assumes 'that the privy council was overawed by the moral dignity which they could not comprehend.'—(Vol. ii. p. 89.) The truth is, that Charles was rapacious and indolent—he hated all trouble, but particularly did he detest that labour which brought no money. From Massachusetts he could hope for no spoil, and he consequently gave it the great benefit of his neglect. James, however, was of a different character—the moral dignity, of which the historian somewhat grandiloquently speaks, was no obstacle in his path. His advice and influence were predominant in the later years of his brother Charles; and the courage that dared, by a *quo warranto*, to avoid the charter of the corporation of London, was not likely to quail before that of Massachusetts Bay. The colony had openly resisted the enforcing of the Act of Navigation; acting throughout, as they did consistently, in accordance with their before declared interpretation of the law of allegiance. In England, however, at no time was this interpretation admitted by the lawyers; and now, when the King appealed to the judges and courts of Westminster, judgment was at once given in favour of the Crown; and in the year 1684, the charter of Massachusetts which had been granted by Charles I. was declared void.

A result followed upon this judgment, which cannot be accounted for by any principles of law, but which can be explained by a consideration of the peculiar circumstances of the case of Massachusetts. The general attack made upon the several corporations in England and in the colonies, was an exceedingly unpopular act, because it was considered a violent, not to say illegal stretch of the prerogative; and when the Revolution of 1688 followed, a general resumption of their charters was permitted, with the almost single exception of Massachusetts.* The lawyers indeed endeavoured to account for this exception, by saying, that in the case of Massachusetts judgment had been given, whereas in the other cases the resignation of the charters had been voluntary.† This statement, however, is not in accordance with the fact. In the case of the city of London, judgment was given after solemn argument; whereas in that of Massachusetts it followed as of course, because of the non-appearance of the defendants. London, nevertheless, resumed her charter, but the Revolution government refused the same favour to Massachusetts. 'Somers and King William were less liberal to Massachusetts than Clarendon and Charles II.†

* Bermuda did not resume its former charter.

† Clarendon and Charles II. always evinced a remarkable liberality,

The question naturally arises, why was this? The answer is to be found in the pretensions of Massachusetts. London did not claim to be independent of Parliament; neither did Virginia or the other colonies; but Massachusetts, openly and in set argument, laid claim to a separate national existence. She had successfully maintained this position before the Long Parliament, and had for years asserted it in the early times of the Restoration. But the Revolution of 1688 was a revolution in favour of the Parliament against the Crown. It established parliamentary supremacy; and the time had not yet arrived when a power in America could resist the authority of Parliament. Massachusetts, therefore, succumbed; but her's was a forced obedience. The old doctrines of her political creed were in secret cherished by her people, taught and supported by her ministers, and influenced every act of her government.

During these various struggles respecting their political institutions, the colonists increased rapidly in numbers—and became rich as well as numerous. Some years before our Revolution, they had not only succeeded in thus firmly establishing their own colony, but had made the first and most important step towards that Federal Union, by which in fact they have become an independent people. The colonies of New England entered into confederacy, and styled themselves the united colonies of New England. This event is thus described by Mr Bancroft—

‘Immediately after the victories over the Pequods, (1637,) at a time when the earliest synod had gathered in Boston the leading magistrates and elders of Connecticut, the design of a confederacy was proposed. Many of the American statesmen, familiar with the character of the government of Holland, possessed sufficient experience and knowledge to frame the necessary plan; but time was wanting; the agents of Plymouth could not be seasonably summoned, and the subject was deferred. The next year it came again into discussion; but Connecticut, offended “because some pre-eminence was yielded to Massachusetts,” insisted on reserving to each state a negative on the proceedings of the confederacy. This reservation was refused; for in that case, said Massachusetts, “all would have come to nothing.”’

‘The vicinity of the Dutch, a powerful neighbour, whose claims Connecticut could not single-handed defeat, led the colonists of the west to renew the negotiation; and with such success that, within a few

in every institution framed under their auspices, for the colonies. The most striking instance of this was afforded by the charter of Rhode Island, which remained for years after the American Revolution the written political code of the state. Of late years, it has been modified, and made somewhat less democratic than was the original royal charter.

years, THE UNITED COLONIES OF NEW ENGLAND were "made all as one." Protection against the encroachments of the Dutch and the French, security against the tribes of savages, the liberties of the gospel in purity and peace, these were the motives of the confederacy. . . .

'The union embraced the separate governments of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven, but to each its respective local jurisdiction was carefully reserved. The question of state rights is nearly two hundred years old. The affairs of the confederacy were intrusted to commissioners, consisting of two from each colony. Church membership was the only qualification required for office. The commissioners, who were to assemble annually, or oftener if exigencies demanded, might deliberate on all things which are the proper concomitants or consequents of a confederation. The affairs of peace and war, and especially Indian affair, exclusively belonged to them; they were authorized to make internal improvements at the common charge; they, too, were the guardians to see equal and speedy justice assured to all the confederates in every jurisdiction. The common expenses were to be assessed according to population.'—(Vol. i. pp. 420-21.)

This plan was executed so early as the year 1643, just twenty-three years after the first pilgrims set foot in New England; and very little more than fourteen years after the date of the charter granted by Charles I. to the Company of Massachusetts Bay. The highest sovereign rights are by this confederation assumed as their own—and communion refused with every one not of their creed. The ambitious and the exclusive spirit of the Puritan was manifest in every provision of the Union.

One other passion was also manifested by these colonists that may be deemed eminently English. Their hatred of the French on their continent, could only be equalled by their desire to possess themselves of the extensive territories which France had acquired, and by which, indeed, they were eventually completely surrounded. The danger which threatened the colonists was great and imminent; and the spirit with which they met it convinced alike their courage and their wisdom.

In the year 1690, while the government of Massachusetts was entirely in the hands of the people, who, on the news of the revolution of 1688, expelled the governors of James, and before Parliament had asserted its authority, a *Congress*—the first American Congress—was called in New York, on the invitation of Massachusetts; and this Congress determined to make war on the French possessions, and attempt the conquest of Acadia and Canada. We need no other evidence to prove, that the desire for an independent existence was no new conception, first produced in the year 1776. 'The conquest of New France was the burning passion of New England, in harmony with its

'hatred of legitimacy and the old forms of Christianity. To subdue the French dominions—this was the joint object which was to foster a common feeling between England and the American colonies.'—(Vol iii. p. 78.)

The history of French adventure over the continent of America, forms a large and interesting portion of Mr Bancroft's labours. The vast territories which France had acquired, together with her systematic schemes of aggrandizement, seemed at one time about to render her paramount in the northern continent. A chain of forts extended from the St Lawrence to the mouths of the Mississippi—a strong religious fervour had led her sons as missionaries over all the immense regions to which she laid claim—and her language and religion appeared destined to be common to the whole population of North America. The story of the destruction of all these fond hopes, as well as of the mode in which they had been originally created, is an important chapter in the history of the English North American colonies. It is probable that if England had permitted France to have retained possession of Canada, she would herself have remained mistress of the colonies she had planted. The near neighbourhood of a powerful enemy kept the colonists dependent upon England. Without the aid of the mother-country, they could not hope to resist the aggressions of France; and they eagerly joined in every attempt of England to conquer the French possessions, because they deemed that conquest a necessary preliminary to their own independence. The English, on the other hand, little thought, when exulting in consequence of their acquisition of Canada, that they had just removed one, and, but for themselves, an insuperable obstacle to the loss of their own colonies.

For the historian of America, there is one other subject of inquiry and consideration which all must approach with sorrow, and dwell upon with shame. Need we say we allude to the institution of Slavery in that country? Americans, when speaking on this painful subject, are apt to consider themselves the subjects of accusation, and therefore at once proceed to assert that slavery is the work, not of American, but English legislation; and they appear to believe that they exculpate themselves when they have inculpated others. We would, however, observe, that the institutions of America—those in which the people of America justly take great pride—are all of English origin; and that as they seek, and fairly, to derive honour not from the creation, but the retaining of these safeguards of liberty and happiness, so must they be content to bear what burden of blame is due to the maintenance of the most odious of insti-

tutions. There is also another point of view as respects their national renown, in which it is necessary to regard this subject. Of the present twenty-seven United States, England planted only thirteen; the remaining states are colonies of the United States, and for the existence of slavery in any of these, the United States are answerable before the great tribunal of the civilized world. Unfortunately we know on what grounds and for what ends this stigma upon our humanity has been extended. We know what are the interests which are still labouring yet further to extend it; and no appeal to ancient or modern history—no proof, however damnatory as regards England, can wipe from the American escutcheon that stain which a sordid love of gain, and a love of power equally degrading, have jointly contributed to cast on it.

On this subject, as on that of Puritan intolerance, Mr Bancroft's zeal to maintain the fame of his country, has led him into a course of inquiry and remark wholly beside the question; and in some degree has induced him, while defending his own people, to be unjust to other men. He commences his chapter on slavery by an admission of its evils and injustice; and then declares that 'the unjust, wasteful, and unhappy system was fastened upon the rising institutions of America, not by the consent of the corporation nor the desires of the emigrants; but as it was introduced by the mercantile avarice of a foreign nation, so it was subsequently riveted by the policy of England, without regard to the interests or the wishes of the colony.'—(Vol. i. p. 159.)

If Mr Bancroft will scan carefully this assertion, he will see that it is contradicted not only by the subsequent story, *but by itself*. The system was fastened on the rising institutions of America by the avarice of a foreign nation, and this in opposition to the desires of the emigrants. But surely there were in Virginia *buyers*, as well as *sellers* of slaves. Who were these buyers? The emigrants. And this is in terms admitted by Mr Bancroft himself. 'For many years,' he says, 'the Dutch were principally concerned in the slave-trade in the market of Virginia; the immediate demand for labourers may, in part, have blinded the eyes of the planters to the ultimate evils of slavery, though the laws of the colony at a very early period discouraged its increase by a special tax upon female slaves.'—(Vol. i. p. 177.) And again he says, 'Towards the Negro the laws [of Virginia] were less tolerant. The statute which declares who are slaves followed the old idea, long prevalent through Christendom,—all servants, not being Christians, imported into this country by shipping shall be slaves. [A.D. 1670.] Yet it was added,

‘ conversion to the Christian faith doth not make free. [1682.]
 ‘ The early Anglo-Saxon rule, interpreting every doubtful ques-
 ‘ tion in favour of liberty, declared the children of freemen to be
 ‘ free. Virginia was humane towards men of the white race ; was
 ‘ severe towards the negro. Doubts arose if the offspring of an
 ‘ Englishman by a negro woman should be bond or free ; and the
 ‘ rule of the Roman law prevailed over the Anglo-Saxon. The
 ‘ offspring followed the condition of its mother. Enfranchisement
 ‘ of the population was not encouraged ; *the female slave was not*
 ‘ *subject to taxation* ; the emancipated negress was tithable. The
 ‘ death of a slave from extremity of correction was not accounted
 ‘ felony ; since it cannot be presumed—such is the language of
 ‘ the statute—that premeditated malice, which alone makes mur-
 ‘ der felony, should induce any man to destroy his own estate.
 ‘ The legislature did not understand human passion ; no such
 ‘ opinion now prevails. Finally, it was made lawful for persons
 ‘ pursuing fugitive coloured slaves to wound or even to kill
 ‘ them. The master was absolute lord over his negro. The
 ‘ slave and the slave’s posterity were bondsmen ; though after-
 ‘ wards, when the question was raised, the devise of negro chil-
 ‘ dren in *posse*, the future increase of a bondwoman, was void. As
 ‘ property in Virginia consisted almost exclusively of land and
 ‘ labourers, the increase of negro slaves was grateful to the pride
 ‘ and to the interests of the large landed proprietors. After a long
 ‘ series of years the institution of slavery renewed a landed aris-
 ‘ tocracy, closely resembling the feudal nobility ; the culminating
 ‘ point was the period when slaves were declared to be real
 ‘ estate, and might be constituted by the owner adscripts to the
 ‘ soil.’ [A.D. 1705—1727.]—(Vol. ii. p. 194.)

These laws were all passed by the people of Virginia, and some of them by legislatures chosen by universal suffrage. How, then, can it be asserted that slavery was instituted, and maintained, in opposition to the wishes of the emigrants ?

The guilt, and there was much guilt, must be shared by all concerned in this terrible and nefarious traffic. The misery and mischiefs still remain ; and cannot, alas ! by any legislation, be at once utterly eradicated. If the slaves were white, a sudden emancipation would put an end to the legal distinction, and in a few years no traces of it would remain. But the difference of colour renders impossible all hope of any such sudden and thorough eradication of the evil. If the slaves were, to-morrow, to be all made freemen, the social ban would still remain—the curse of his skin would stick to the unfortunate negro. In a case so fraught with difficulties, it is not the part of a wise or good man to excite angry feelings, to bandy abuse, or to attempt by any sophistry or arti-

fice to hide or extenuate the evil. We fear, indeed, that the efforts of the zealous but indiscreet friends of freedom have, in many cases, increased instead of alleviating the misery of the slave. . We should recollect that it is not always cupidity that renders the slave-owner jealous of any interference. Fear, ever wakeful fear, besets them all, and they dread, as a consequence of the abolitionist teaching, not simply the loss of property but life itself. They feel that they, their families, their friends, their very country, is on the verge of destruction. We need not, therefore, wonder at the jealous watch which they keep against the intrusion of any doctrines or doings which may be followed, as they believe, by such terrible consequences. With their honest terrors we can sympathise, and pity those who feel it. But there is another class of slave-holders against whom we confess our anger rises, and for whose arrogance and cruelty we would cheerfully assist in contriving a punishment. We mean those who declare slavery not only to be no evil, but an absolute necessity *in a perfect republic*. If there were any danger of such doctrines prevailing, we should be prepared, at any risk, to oppose them by every species of abolitionist agitation. But there is no such danger. A few extravagant, crack-brained demagogues of the South, excited by what Mr Bentham delighted to call 'an interest-begotten prejudice,' may sometimes rave after this fashion; but no rational American denies the dreadful evil which slavery has entailed on his country. There is none who does not ardently desire to put an end to this calamitous institution. One fundamental rule, indeed, there is which every honest politician is bound religiously to follow—and that is, to oppose the *extension* of the curse. It may be impossible, as we believe it is, to eradicate, at once, the institution and its consequences from those states in which it has been long established. But no desire of gain, no plan of party aggrandizement, can justify the propagation of this moral pestilence. We must be permitted to doubt of the sincerity of any man's lamentations over the evils of slavery, who seeks by his vote, or his influence, or his countenance, 'to rivet the *unjust, wasteful*, and 'unhappy system upon the rising institutions' of the states which have yet to be formed under the American constitution.

We cannot take leave of this work without again enforcing upon the mind of the English reader, the necessity of perusing it with a catholic spirit. All that is of chief importance in it, is entitled to his esteem. The real liberality—the general fairness—the labour and conscientious research it evinces—deserve, and we are assured will receive, his warmest approbation. There are some peculiarities, however, of style—some modes of expression

—some habits of thought which are novel; and may, perhaps, not prove entirely grateful to our cisatlantic taste. But Mr Bancroft's is an American not an English production, and must be judged by a reference to American feelings. We treat a German or a French work after this fashion—and this one, although written in our language, is not subject to our conventional criticism. On one account we are sincerely glad that we are called upon to make this remark. The great incubus on American literature is imitation. Every thing has to be fashioned on an English model; and nothing is deemed worthy even by Americans, which has not received the sanction of English fashion. We desire, however, to see our transatlantic offspring approve themselves a people, in the real and great sense of that term, by making for themselves a national literature. Let them bring their quota to the world's wealth of wisdom; and considering who and what they are, that quota—the debt which they owe to this common stock—ought to be ample, and worthy of their material greatness. Let them to the exploring of the vast, and yet untrodden regions of thought, bring the same adventurous and daring spirit, which distinguished their ancestors who led the way into the wilderness—and the grateful world will hail them as worthy descendants of their great progenitors.

The present high position of Mr Bancroft, bestowed as it has been in consequence of his historic labours, is not only an honour to himself, but to his country, by whom it was conferred. And this, it should be remembered, is no solitary occurrence. The government of the United States has been willing to acknowledge and reward the literary merit of her citizens of every party—thus holding out a great and due incitement to men of superior ability to take an active part in the political proceedings of their native land. We cannot indeed subscribe to that philosophy which would have us believe, that the United States is destined to be left by her more gifted sons to the guidance and control of inferior and more turbulent spirits. In the case before us, we sincerely hope that the occasion of more widely extending his knowledge of mankind, may lead to the dissipation of any prejudice which yet lingers in the mind of the historian; and that his European experience may enable him, in the volumes which are yet to appear, to describe with increased efficiency for the world's instruction the many worthy examples of ability and virtue which his country's annals afford.*

* The volumes requisite to complete the 'History of the United States,' are, we understand, preparing for the press.

ART. V.—1. *Beschreibung der Stadt Rom*. Von F. PLATNER, C. BUNSEN, &c., mit *Beyträgen*, von B. G. NIEBUHR. 8vo. 3 vols. Stuttgart: 1829–1842.—(Description of the City of Rome. By E. PLATNER, C. BUNSEN, &c. With Contributions, by B. G. NIEBUHR.)

2.—*Die Basiliken des Christlichen Roms*. Von CHRISTIAN KARL JOSIAS BUNSEN. Folio. Munich: 1844.—(The Basilicas of Christian Rome. By CHRISTIAN CHARLES JOSIAH BUNSEN.)

WHATEVER interest can attach to any department of topographical or antiquarian discussion, must unquestionably attach to the general subject of these volumes. Whatever may be the importance generally of an accurate study, or still more of an actual view, of celebrated places, belongs peculiarly to the sight of capital cities. Whether, as in Italy, the life of the people has flowed from the towns; or, as in Germany, the life of the towns has flowed from the people: whether, like London, the capital is the city of a great nation; or, like France, the people is the nation of a great city: whether, like Venice or Athens, they are the creations of a great republic; or, like Berlin and St Petersburg, the creations of a great sovereign,—there is always something in the insight afforded by the first glance into the history of their inhabitants, which nothing else can supply. Such emphatically is the interest which is attached to Rome; with this great distinction, however, that it is attached to her, not as the capital of the modern Papal States, nor even as the capital of the ancient senate and people, but as the Metropolis of the World, in a sense which is true of no other city before or since. This is the peculiar charm of Rome. Its works of art, ancient and modern, are in part accidentally connected with it—in part shared by other less distinguished places. Its importance, in the general history of the world, is equalled, if not surpassed, by Athens and Jerusalem; but its significance, as the capital of the ancient civilized world, is what it possesses alone; and what leaves on all who are affected by it at all, the most abiding impression which they carry away from its walls. What is true of the topography of Greece as a country, is true of the topography of Rome as a city. It is a true instinct which has prefaced all the histories of Greece by a description of the country, and not of the particular towns; and the histories of Rome by a description of the city, and not of the country in which it was situated. Whatever details may occur of Athenian or Spartan localities in Thirlwall, are lost in the interest

of his general sketch of Greece. Whatever notices may occur of Italian geography in Arnold, will be found rather in his lectures on modern history than in his history of Rome.

And to this great subject have been devoted the labours not of mere antiquarians or topographers, but of men who, whilst they have acquired an European celebrity for the depth and universality of their knowledge, have also taken an interest in the fortunes of ancient Rome amounting almost to personal enthusiasm. Few educated Englishmen who have visited Rome for the last twenty years, can forget the kindness and information they have received from the little colony of Germans which still is clustered on the western height of the Capitol, though time has deprived it of some of its most distinguished ornaments. Of these, many are doubtless altogether unknown to the English public; but two of the names in the title-page of the *Description of the City of Rome*, will at once arrest the attention of every reader. One is the illustrious historian Niebuhr, who here added the last finish to his almost intuitive knowledge of the state of ancient Rome; and whose dwelling-place beside the Theatre of Marcellus rightly claims a place* in the history of the city, with which his name must be for ever associated. The other is his successor Bunsen, of whom it would be superfluous to speak to Englishmen, were it not almost necessary to recall his earlier fame, as the friend of Niebuhr, and the restorer of Roman topography, before it is eclipsed by his more recent works in History and Theology—were it not a pleasure to have again brought before us the recollections of that delightful residence on the brow of the Tarpeian height, so long the resort of all that was most elevated and enlightened in Roman society.

To enter into the details of this great work would here be out of place. Yet it is impossible, in turning over its pages, not to conjure up those images of greatness, which, having been once seen, can never pass away from the mind; and which—though no description, not even one which like this unites the strictest scientific accuracy with the most fervent poetical enthusiasm, can ever entirely reproduce them—are yet susceptible of such a delineation as will illustrate their inseparable connexion with the history which they have witnessed.

It is no slight gain, even at the outset, to one who looks on Rome with historical eyes, that, through all the vicissitudes of soil and buildings, it is still easy to discern the primitive aspect of the

* As in Mr Merivale's excellent *History of the Roman Emperors*; in the publications of the *Useful Knowledge Society*—now unfortunately ended, or at least interrupted.

place. This is more important as a ground of actual study than many are aware of. In most celebrated places, especially those of modern history, the chief advantage of ocular inspection, or of minute realization of localities, consists merely in the greater vividness with which the images of the past are thus recalled. Whatever connexion may exist between the place and the event is either accidental, or, if the congruity be so striking as to compel the belief in some deeper coincidence, it belongs to an order of Providence which we cannot interpret. But in the more primitive history of the human race, or of particular nations, this connexion is not imaginary but real; the influence of the physical features of a country on the original character of its inhabitants, is as clearly one of the secondary means of Providential agency as any that can be named. Hence it is that no spots are so really instructive to the traveller in Greece, as the primeval sanctuaries of Delphi and Lebadea, or the patriarchal fastnesses of Tiryns and Mycenæ;—hence, we should imagine, the history of the Jewish people would receive a more lively illustration from the Terebinths of Hebron, or the Granite precipices of Sinai, than from the sight even of Jerusalem itself,—connected as it chiefly is with a period when the first awful impressiveness of natural scenery was beginning to fade away before a higher and more universal influence. In like manner, the Englishman of the twenty-fifth century after the foundation of Rome, may still watch at their very cradle one at least of the powers which helped to produce the Roman people. When we stand on the slope of the Alban hills—on the rim of the crater of their extinct volcano, and look down into the calm lake reposing, Avernus-like, within it, under the shade of its surrounding forests—we have before us the very scene which brooded over the mysterious infancy of the first founders of the Roman name; with an influence as potent as that which, in their own august mythology, the twins were supposed to have drunk in with their first breath from the wolf who suckled them. When we feel the ground of the seven hills swelling beneath our feet—when we trace their original fastness-like character in the precipitous face of the Capitoline cliff, or the abrupt and wooded slope of the Aventine—when we observe the two outlying ramparts of the Janiculan and the Pincian ranges, warding off such incursions as swept away the towns in the open plains, yet allowing of such expansion as would afterwards befit the mistress of the world;—when we see this, and contrast it with the situation of almost every other ancient town in Italy—the Etrurian and Volscian fortresses on the narrow crests of their native rocks, the Campanian cities lost in the luxuriance of their level and

fertile plains—it is difficult not, to recognise something of that fore-shadowing of the future destinies of the Eternal City, which the Romans themselves delighted to trace in the prophetic augury of the twelve vultures of Romulus; or the refusal of Terminus to leave his wonted place amongst the gods of the Capitol. The race, the language, the institutions, the religion of the Romans have perished—the very facts of their early history have disappeared; but the framework from which all these received their impression at the time when they were most susceptible of outward impressions, still remains,—mutilated, but not destroyed or deprived of its peculiar meaning.

Again, we have said that it is the peculiar distinction of Rome to have been not merely *a* capital, but *the* capital of the world in a sense in which no other city has been or is likely to be again—that, though never the capital of Italy, it yet did eventually become the capital of the ancient civilized world. And it is precisely of this closing period—not of the period of its growth and of its struggles—that the Roman ruins bear the deepest impress. We do not deny that even the times of the commonwealth derive considerable light from the sight of the Forum; and it is one of the greatest merits of the French *Essay* which Chevalier Bunsen has published on the subject, that, now for the first time, a representation of that immortal spot has been laid before us; which is not only true, but gives to almost every existing vestige an intelligible object and meaning. What a mist is rolled away from our eyes the moment that we are allowed to trace the course of the *Via Sacra* up to the Temple of the Capitoline Jupiter on its rightful place upon the Tarpeian rock, and to find the true direction of the Forum in the open space between the Capitol and the Colosseum; instead of being dragged aside by the perverse ingenuity of Italian Topographers to look for it between the Capitol and the Tiber! How naturally does the execution of the Catilinarian conspirators rise before us, when, in the substructions which lie immediately beneath the scene of their imprisonment in the Mamertine prison, we recognise the basements of the Temple of Concord, in which the Senate was convened to pronounce the fatal sentence! How lively is the interest with which we regard the three pillars which stand immediately in front of the ancient Treasury, hewn out of the Capitoline rock, when we discover in them the remains of the Temple of Saturn, whose gates the Tribune vainly endeavoured to defend, against the attempts of Cæsar to appropriate the treasures of the state which lay behind it!

Still when from particular details we turn to the general effect

of the whole scene, there can be no doubt that it is not Republican, but Imperial Rome, which rivets our attention. It is almost startling to observe the peculiar significance of almost all that remains of that time, when its material and outward aspect most truly represented its inward life. Let any one look over the mass of ruins within the city, as he stands on the tower of the Capitol,—the Temple of Vespasian, vindicating by its solitary grandeur its just title to the recently recovered name which connects it with the restorer of the city, after the desolation which had laid it waste from Galba to Vitellius—the crash of the Palace of the Cæsars on the hill from which it derives its name—the huge mountain of the Amphitheatre of Titus—the three triumphal arches, each with the mark of destiny on its front: or let him gaze on that perhaps yet sublimer view without the city, which is commanded by the terrace of the Lateran Church—the desolate Campagna, with the ever-varying lights and shades empurpling its deep indentations—the long files of broken aqueducts advancing as if in melancholy cavalcades towards the city which they never reach; and he will feel that he has seen the ruin of the most august power that was ever enthroned upon the earth—he will understand how truly the Apocalyptic Seer saw in the imperial city which sat upon the Seven Hills, though in a greater and more awful form, a true revival of no less than the ancient Babylon.

Lastly, the Roman antiquarian has one more province to explore of the deepest historical interest—the city not of the Republic, not of the Cæsars, but of the early Christians. We say advisedly of the early Christians; for of the Rome of later Christendom—of the great capital of the Papacy, there is nothing, or hardly any thing, on which the historical eye can fasten. One transient gleam from the life of Rienzi lights up the scene in front of the modern Capitol—one or two edifices are connected with the name, and only with the name, of Innocent III. But, generally speaking, in the interval between the eighth and the sixteenth century, the chasm is complete. Of no city in the world perhaps has the historical continuity been so entirely broken. We leap at once from the age of Gregory I. to the age of Leo X. There is hardly any great town of northern Europe, which has so little impress of the middle ages, as the city which rose as it were from the grave to be their capital. Already when we turn from the ruins of the Forum to the Modern Rome, we find that its interest for the artist has begun—but its interest for the historian has vanished—it has ceased to be the metropolis—it has become what it has been ever since—the Museum, of the world. But,

as we said, there is in the history of the city of Rome—between the last stage of its earlier existence, of which there remains so much, and the first stage of its second existence, of which there remains so little—one memorable field of debatable ground, which, for historical interest, can vie with all that precedes and with all that follows. We know not what might be the light thrown upon the early condition of the Christian society by the scenes of its first vicissitudes in Palestine or Asia Minor; but we much doubt whether even these can furnish any thing which so vividly calls before us an image of the first centuries of the Christian era, as the localities and monuments of Rome. We do not now speak of the ecclesiastical traditions in which it abounds at every turn—but of the two great vestiges of those momentous times which have been indisputably preserved to us in the CATACOMBS and in the BASILICAS. Of the former, we will only say, that a more striking proof could hardly be given of the imperfect manner in which the so-called Histories of the early Church have been written, than the slight * notice which even the best of them has bestowed upon the whole state of life and society, which is implied in the existence which is expressed in the monuments of the Roman Catacombs. We do not profess to have studied the subject, but surely one glance at those endless galleries, chapels, and cemeteries of the ‘subterraneous city’—one glance at the rude sculptures, the ill-spelt epitaphs, the humble implements of trade, now preserved in the ‘Lapidarian Gallery,’ through which the visitor of the Vatican passes, on his way to the splendid works of art which adorned the cotemporary chambers of the palaces of Nero, and the baths of Titus, is a better illustration of the triumph of the weak things of the world over the things that are mighty, than the declamations of a hundred apologists; and opens a far deeper view into the life of the first ages of Christianity, than the most elaborate descriptions of sects and heresies which crowd the pages of the ordinary ecclesiastical history.

Of the Basilicas, however, the work of Chevalier Bunsen invites us to speak more particularly; and to this subject, and the thoughts which it suggests, we will now confine ourselves—restricting our remarks to the historical question to which the work professes to be an answer, namely, What was the original idea which the Christians of the first centuries conceived of a place of worship?—What was the model which they chose for

* We must make an exception in favour of Mr Milman’s ‘History of Christianity,’ Book iv. c. 4.

themselves when, on emerging from the Catacombs, they looked round upon the existing edifices of the civilized world?

For nearly two hundred years, as is well known, set places of worship had no existence at all. In the third century, notices of them became more frequent, but still in such ambiguous terms, that it is difficult to ascertain how far the building or how far the congregation is the prominent idea in the writer's mind; and it is not, therefore, till the fourth century, when they became so general as to acquire a fixed form and name, that our inquiry properly begins.

Of the public edifices of the heathen world, three kinds alone were likely to attract the Christian architect of this period, for the purpose of Christian assembly and worship. The one to which the instincts of a large part of modern Christendom would have most naturally turned, seems, by ancient Christendom, at least in the Western provinces, to have been most immediately rejected. The *Temple*, though occasionally adopted by the Eastern Emperors,* and in some few instances, as the Pantheon, at Rome itself, was never incorporated into the institutions of Western Christendom. It was not only that all its associations, both of name and place, jarred with the most cherished notions of Christian purity and holiness, but also that the very construction of the edifice was wholly incompatible with the new idea of worship, which Christianity had brought into the world. Let any one who has seen the Temple of Isis at Pompeii (we mention this as, perhaps, the most complete specimen now extant of a heathen temple at the time of the Christian era) reflect on the impossibility of amalgamating elements so heterogeneous. It was exactly in accordance with the genius of heathenism, that the Priest should minister in the presence of the god, withdrawn from view in the little cell or temple that rose in the centre of the consecrated area; but how should the president of the Christian assembly be concealed from the vast concourse in whose name he acted, and who, as with the voice of many waters, were to reply 'Amen' to his giving of thanks? It was most congenial to the feeling of Pagan worshippers that they should drop in, one by one, or in separate groups, to present their individual prayers or offerings to their chosen Divinity; but how was a Christian congregation, which, by its very name of *ἐκκλησία*, recalled the image of those tumultuous crowds which had thronged the Pnyx or Forum, in the days of the Athenian or Roman Commonwealth, to be brought within the

* Bingham, viii. 3.

narrow limits even of the outer courts, much less of the actual edifice which was supposed to be the dwelling of the God? Even the Temple of Jerusalem itself—pure as it was from the revolting recollections which invested the shrines of the heathen deities, and present as it was, no doubt, to the minds of Christians, even after a desolation of two hundred years—was obviously inadequate to become the visible and outward home of a religion to which the barriers of Judaism were hardly less uncongenial than those of Paganism itself. A Temple, whether heathen or Jewish, could never be the model of a purely Christian edifice. The very name itself had now, in Christian phraseology, passed into a higher sphere; and however much long use may have habituated us to the application of the word to material buildings, we can well understand how instinctively an earlier age would shrink from any lower meaning than the moral and spiritual sense attached to it in those Apostolical Writings which had taught the world that the true temple of God was in the hearts and consciences of men. And therefore, in the words of Bingham, ‘for the first three ages the name is scarce ever’ (he might have said never) ‘applied to Christian places of worship;’ and though instances of it are to be found in the rhetorical language of the fourth, yet it never obtained a hold on the ordinary language of Christendom.

It is to a wholly different quarter that we are to look for an answer to our inquiry. We have spoken of the abuse of the appellation of Temple in later times; it is perhaps even more to be lamented that the word *Church*, or *Ecclesia*, already fraught with meanings sufficiently complicated, should have been additionally burdened in later times, by the expression which has identified it with the material building; when we might have retained the original and unambiguous title of *Basilica*, ‘which’ (again to use the language of Bingham) ‘ever since it came into use, has been the common name of all churches’ down to the commencement of the middle ages.

What, then, was the ancient heathen structure, whose title has thus acquired a celebrity so far beyond its original intention? It is, as Chevalier Bunsen strikingly observes, the especial offspring and symbol of Western civilization;—Greek in its origin, Roman in its progress, Christian in its ultimate development,—the word is co-extensive with the range of the European family. In the earliest form under which we can catch any trace of it, it stands in the dim antiquity of the Homeric age—at the point where the first beginnings of Grecian civilization melt away into the more primitive forms of Oriental society. It is the gateway of the Royal Palace, in which the ancient Kings,

Agamemnon at Mycenæ, David at Jerusalem, Pharoah at Thebes or Memphis, sat to hear and to judge the complaints of their people; and of which the last* trace was preserved at Athens in the 'King's Portico' under the Pnyx, where the Archon King performed the last judicial functions of the last shadow of the old Athenian royalty. But it was amongst the Romans that it first assumed that precise form and meaning which have given it so lasting an importance. Judging from the great prominence of the Basilicas as public buildings, and from the more extended application of them in the imperial times to purposes of general business, the nearest parallel to them in modern cities would doubtless be found in the Town-hall or Exchange. What, in fact, the rock-hewn semicircle of the Pnyx was at Athens—that the open platform of the Forum had been in the earlier days of Rome itself—that, in the later times of the Commonwealth was the Basilica—the general place of popular resort and official transactions; but, in accordance with the increased refinement of a more civilized age, protected from the mid-day sun and the occasional storm by walls and roof. Still, the original idea of a hall of justice, which came with the name from Greece, was never lost at Rome; and it was characteristic of the Eternal City, that the predominant image which was impressed on its public buildings was not commercial, or religious, or even political, but judicial. A long hall divided by two rows of columns into a central avenue, with two side aisles, in one of which the male, in the other the female appellants to justice waited their turn; whilst the middle aisle was occupied by the chance crowd that assembled to hear the proceedings, or for purposes of merchandise; a transverse avenue which crossed the others in the centre, and, if used at all, was occupied by the advocates and others engaged in the public business; the whole building closed by a long semicircular recess, (the form, it is said, most convenient for hearing,) in the centre of which sat the prætor or supreme judge, seen high above the heads of all on the elevated† 'tribunal,' which was deemed the indispensable symbol of the Roman judgment-seat.

* It is perhaps doubtful how far the *form* of the word 'Basilica,' though of course itself purely Greek, was ever used with this acceptance in Greece itself. Στα βασιλειῶς is the designation of the Athenian portico, and οἶκος or ναὸς βασιλικῶς is Eusebius' expression for the Christian Basilica.

† The 'judgment hall' or prætorium of the Roman magistrates in the provinces had no further resemblance to the Basilica, than in the apparent coincidence of name which must frequently have arisen from their formation out of the palaces of the former kings of the conquered

Such was the form of the Basilica, as they met the view of the first Christians in the different forums of the imperial city. It needs but few words to account for their adaptation to the use of a Christian church. Something, no doubt, is to be ascribed, as Mr Milman well remarks, to the fact, (*History of Christianity*, iv. 26,) that 'as these buildings were numerous, and attached to any imperial residence, they might be bestowed at once on the Christians without either interfering with the course of justice, or bringing the religious feelings of the hostile parties into collision.' Still, the instances of actual transformation are exceedingly rare—in most cases it must have been impossible, from the erection of the early Christian churches on the graves, real or supposed, of martyrs and apostles, which, according to the almost universal practice of the ancient world, were necessarily without the walls of the city, as the halls of justice, from their connexion with everyday life, were necessarily within. It is on some such grounds as these, we imagine, that M. Bunsen conceives there must have been something in the type itself of the Basilica, at least not uncongenial to the early Christian views of worship, independent of any causes of mere accidental convenience. What this was has been anticipated, in what has been said of the rejection of the temple. There was now a 'church,' a 'congregation,' an 'assembly,' which could no longer be hemmed within the narrow precincts, or detained in the outer courts of the heathen *temenos* or enclosure—where could they be so naturally placed as in the long aisles which had received the concourse of the Roman populace, and which now became the 'nave' of the Christian Cathedrals? Whatever distinctions existed in the Christian society, were derived, not as in the Jewish temple, from any notions of inherent religious differences, between different classes of men, but merely, as in the Jewish synagogue, from considerations of order and decency; and where could these be found more readily than in the separate places still retained by the sexes in the aisles of the Basilica; or the appropriation of the upper end of the building to the clergy and singers, from whose ministrations it became transformed into the choir or chorus? There was a law to be proclaimed, and a verdict to be pronounced, by the highest officers of the new society; and what more natural, than that

nations. But so necessary was the elevation of the judge's seat considered to the final delivery of the judicial sentence, that, as has been made familiar to us in one memorable instance, (John, xix. 13,) the absence of the usual tribunal was supplied by a tessellated pavement, which the magistrate carried with him, and on which his chair or throne was placed before he could pronounce sentence.

the Bishop should take his seat on the lofty tribunal of the prætor, and thence rebuke, exhort, or command, with an authority not the less convincing, because it was moral and not legal? There was lastly a bond of communion between all the members of that assembly, to which the occupants of the Temple and the Basilica had been alike strangers—what more fitting than that the empty centre of the ancient judgment hall, where its several avenues and aisles joined in one, should now receive a new meaning; and that there, neither in the choir nor nave, but in the midst of them all, should be erected the Altar or Table of that communion which was to belong exclusively neither to the clergy nor to the people, but to bind both together in indissoluble harmony? *

Such, according to the work before us, was the history of the Basilica:—First, the Greek portico or colonnade, attached to the royal palace—Secondly, the Roman hall, whether of justice or exchange, in which the simple columns of Grecian architecture were blended with the arch and vault of Rome—Hellenic in its origin, but only acquiring, through the power of Rome, its connexion with the destiny of the civilized world—Thirdly, the earliest edifice of Christian worship—attesting, by the mere fact of its origin, the triumph of that faith which had thus turned to its own especial purposes the halls where Christians had once pleaded for their lives; as Socrates, on the same charge of impiety, had in the Athenian prototype of the very same building pleaded before them—the triumph well described in the address of one of the earliest Christian Poets to one of the latest Emperors, which is at once our best testimony to the fact, and to the moral which these pages have brought before us—*Basilica, olim negotiis plena, nunc votis pro tuâ salute susceptis.*

Varieties in this adaptation of the Basilica to the Christian Church there must indeed have been, even from the first. The partial adoption of the Temple in the Eastern provinces we have already noticed; and, although the form of the Basilica even there was never entirely lost, yet it is impossible

* We have not thought it necessary to enter into the occasional additions in which the 'atrium' and 'impluvium' of the more private hall seem to have become the models of the outer court and 'cantharus' of the Basilica—nor to point out the obvious appropriation of the seats immediately round the altar to the emperor and his attendants, when present—of which we still retain a memorial, in the probable derivation of 'chancellor,' from the 'cancelli' or 'rails,' by which that officer sat.

not to perceive infringements of the original idea, which M. Bunsen lays down as the essential distinction between the two—already the ‘nave’ had, by an easy transition, become the ‘naos,’ or shrine of the present Deity—the altar was, if not cut off from the laity, at least guarded on all sides—it may be from clergy and laity alike,—by a trelliswork, intended to exclude the touch of profane hands: and the writings of Chrysostom, if not of Athanasius, indicate the use of curtains before it, which, according to its situation in the Western edifices, we can hardly conceive possible. Another variation, set forth very clearly in this work, deserves, perhaps, more attention than it has usually received. We have said that there were only three kinds of public edifices at Rome which could have attracted the observation of the early Christians. Of these two have been mentioned. The third is still to be seen in the gigantic structure of the later Roman TOMBS, whose remains line the green causeway of the Appian road, and have become alternately, as the case may be, the quarries or the fortresses of the modern city; and no one who reflects on the close connexion between so many Christian churches with the grave of some illustrious saint or martyr, can wonder that, in some instances, the form of the Basilica should have been either considerably modified, or entirely superseded, by the circular form which characterizes the huge fabric of the tomb of Cæcilia Metella, or the mausoleums of Augustus and of Hadrian. But this custom chiefly prevailed in the East, where, as might be expected, it received a powerful impulse from Helena’s discovery, real or supposed, of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem; or in churches which, like those of the Templars in after times, had an immediate reference to that notion. In the West, however, the Basilica still retained its pre-eminence—its general outline can still be discerned as the groundwork even of our northern cathedrals—and in Rome itself, even the casual traveller must be reminded of the curule seat of the Roman prætor, when he sees the marble chair of the first Gregory in the church which bears his name, on the Cælian Hill; and in the situation of the great altar of St Peter, which rises in the very centre of the whole edifice, immediately under the dome itself, he may still observe no insignificant trace of the arrangement which, according to the foregoing account, once directed the original system of Christian worship. It was reserved for later times to introduce those changes which M. Bunsen ingeniously identifies with the progress of the later hierarchical views of the Christian society,—when first the altar was withdrawn behind the rails or *cancelli* which parted the choir from the nave—then concealed

from the gaze of the multitude during the celebration of the eucharist, behind the veil which still forms so conspicuous a feature in the churches of the East—then covered with the huge canopy which closed up the once open view of the choir and clergy, enjoyed by the people throughout the sacred edifice—lastly, transported to the extreme eastern end—a sign that the original idea of the Basilica had now passed away; that the crowded communion had now become a solitary sacrifice; that the Church, as in name so in reality, as in popular belief so also in systematic theory, had now become absorbed into the Clergy.

We have now given, we believe, a faithful representation of M. Bunsen's account of the history of the Christian Basilica; in its essential points, indeed, agreeing with the chapters which treat of the same subject in Mr Hope's *History of Architecture*; but not the less original in the vividness with which the idea is conceived and the skill with which it is followed out. We are not prepared to subscribe to every detail of his argument, or to lay equal stress with him on its general results; nor is it our intention to follow him through the architectural development of the Basilica in later times, or discuss the relation in which it stood to the Gothic cathedral of the middle ages. We could have wished, too, for a more explicit statement than we always find, of the facts on which his theory rests; and of his mode of reconciling it with the strong hierarchical language which is used by Eusebius and others, in describing some of those features of the building which he regards as most symbolical of the exactly contrary tendency. Meanwhile, however, gratefully accepting his view as the most consistent account with which we are acquainted, of what cannot be doubted to be an important fact in early Christian history; we may perhaps be pardoned for lingering on it a short time, to ask ourselves the connexion in which it stands with that history generally.

We must, indeed, beware of founding upon so narrow a basis as is presented to us in this single fact, any theory of the general state of society in which it arose. Such inverted pyramids must always meet the fate which they provoke. And in the development of principles so purely spiritual as those which were at work in the first ages of Christianity, it would be doubly mistaken to give an undue importance to any subject of merely archaeological inquiry. However great we may suppose to have been the reverence for outward objects in the third or fourth centuries, the first burst of the new faith through the local bonds of Judaism and of Paganism was still sufficiently powerful, to check the identification even in name, of the moral with the material church. Not even in the great cathedrals of the middle

ages, which did undoubtedly express the feelings of their age, is there any such ground for that sickly extravagance of modern superstition, which would see the morals of a whole age or system only through the medium of their works of art. Much less are we justified in drawing any such elaborate conclusions in an age of the church when Christian architecture could hardly be said to exist—where every original effort of Christian art was necessarily repressed and overwhelmed, by the magnificent structures which rose over against them in the buildings of the Roman Empire.

Still, whether we trace any direct connexion or not between M. Bunsen's view of the origin of the Basilica, and the state of the early Church, there is certainly no contradiction between them;—even if we may not look upon the Basilica as a proof of the genuine tendencies of the first ages of the Christian commonwealth, we may at least use it as an illustration of them;—even if we may not class it amongst those outward objects in which the genius of a great period naturally embodies itself, we may avail ourselves of its aid to remind us of those movements out of which it actually arose; and to show us that if there was any thing in the fourth century of that symbolism, which some now hold up as the very essence of Christianity, it is at least capable of an interpretation as far asunder as the poles, from the symbolism of Durandus or of Laud.

In the first place, it may no doubt have been an accident that the first Christian place of worship should have been taken from an edifice so expressive of the popular life of Greece and Rome,—so exact an antithesis to the seclusion of the Jewish and Pagan Temple. But if it was an accident, it is strikingly in accordance with all that we know of the strength of the popular element of the early Church,—not merely in its first origin, when even an Apostle did not pronounce sentence on an offender, or issue a decree or appoint an officer, without the concurrence of the whole society; but even in those later times, when Augustine fled from city to city to escape from the elevation which he was destined to receive, from the wild enthusiasm of an African populace;—when a layman, a magistrate, an unbaptised catechumen was, on the chance acclamation of an excited mob, transformed into Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan. It is precisely this true image of the early Church, the union of essential religious equality with a growing distinction of rank and order, that the Basilica was to bring before us in a visible and tangible shape. It might have been unnatural, if the whole constitution, the whole religion of the three first centuries, was, as some would tell us, wrapt up in the institution of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons;

if the current of popular energy had been dried up at its source by the terrors of the Vatican, or frozen into sudden stagnation by the caution of Lambeth. But it could not have been deemed altogether strange, in an age that still caught the echoes of that contest which convulsed the early Christian society, between the last expiring efforts of the free government of the Church, and the first germ of the absolute despotism of the clergy. It would be most instructive if we could regard its several elements as the counterpart in architecture, to that struggle which in literature is represented to us in the conflicting editions of Ignatius, and which, whether we believe in the Longer Epistles or the Shorter, the seventeen, the seven, or the three—alike tells us that there was a popular cause which insisted on making itself heard—that the absorption of all the offices of the Church into a single order, or a single individual, was not so instantaneously brought to pass, as some of our late Anglocatholic friends would have tried to make us believe.

Again, the rise of the first edifice of Christian worship, not out of the Jewish Temple, or even the Jewish Synagogue, but out of the Roman hall of justice, may be regarded as no inapt illustration of another fact of early Christian History, not so much disputed as that which we have just mentioned, inasmuch as it has been fortunate in escaping the notice of controversialists; but still of great importance to the right understanding of those times, and far too little dwelt upon by our ordinary ecclesiastical writers. We are often reminded both *in bonam et malam partem* by the polemics of opposite schools, of the identity of early Christian customs and institutions with those of the older dispensation. Few topics have been more popular in modern times, whether in praise or blame, than the Judaic character of the worship, ministry, and teaching of the three first centuries. But the indisputable share which the Gentile world has had in the material buildings of the Christian Church, immediately suggests a doubt whether it may not have also contributed something to the no less complex structure of its moral fabric. The influence of Judaism on the first century, was undoubtedly very great. On the one hand, the early sects had all more or less something of a Judaizing character; on the other hand, even the Apostles could not have been what they were had they not been Jews. But the fall of Jerusalem was in truth the fall of the Jewish world—it was in itself a reason for the close of the apostolic age—a death-blow to the influence of the Jewish nationality on the future fortunes of the world at large. Something, no doubt, both of its form and spirit lingered on, in the institutions of that great society which sprung out of its ruins; but Judaism itself had expired, and,

however much the mere ceremonial and superficial aspect of the Patristic age may bear a Jewish physiognomy, it is to the influences at work in the social fabric of the Roman Empire itself, that we must seek the true springs of action in the Christian Church, —so far as they came from any foreign source. It is therefore with something more than a mere artistical interest that we find the Bishop seated on the chair of the Prætor—the forms of the cathedral already wrapt up in the halls of Æmilius and of Trajan. It is in exact accordance not only with the more general influence to which the Christian society was exposed, from the rhetorical subtleties, the magical superstitions, the idolatrous festivals, and the dissolute habits of the heathen world at large, but also with the more especial influence which the purely political spirit of the Roman State exercised over some of their most peculiar institutions—with the fact that the very names by which the functions of their officers are described, sprung not from the religious, but from the civil vocabulary of the times—and are expressions not of spiritual so much as of political power. ‘Ordo’ (the origin of our present ‘orders’) was the well-known name of the municipal senates of the empire: ‘ordination’ (the original of our ‘ordination’) was never used by the Romans except for civil appointments; the ‘tribunes of the people’ are the likeness which the historian of the *Decline and Fall*, and the author of *The Church of the Fathers*, alike recognize in the early Christian Bishops: the preponderance of the Gentile spirit of government, and the revival of the spirit of the Roman Senate in the counsels of Cyprian, was the thought which forced itself on the mind of the last English historian of Rome, in spite of many earlier prepossessions: even the Papacy itself, according to the pregnant expression of Hobbes, which, however inadequate as a complete account of it, is yet true as far as it goes, was but ‘the ghost of the dead Roman Empire sitting upon the grave thereof.’ Evils and abuses innumerable no doubt flowed from the excess of this influence on the Christian Church, but in itself it was a true instinct, which no declamations about the contrast of civil and spiritual power were able completely to extinguish. The free spirit of the Roman citizen felt that it could breathe no where so freely as in the bosom of the Christian society. The Christian minister felt that no existing office or title to power was so solemn as that of the Roman magistrate; and Christianity could pay no more striking act of homage to the greatness of the expiring Empire, than in this declaration of its belief, unconscious if we will, that the hall of Roman justice was not too secular for a place of Christian worship.

Yet once more—we have seen how the very name of Basilica

leads our thoughts back to the period of Roman greatness and Grecian refinement—we have seen how naturally the several parts of the heathen and the secular edifice adapted themselves to their higher Christian use—we have seen how, on the one hand, as if by an exact inversion of the Divine rebuke, the den of thieves was changed into the house of prayer—the words of heavenly love spoken from the inexorable seat of Roman judgment—the halls of opposition and wrangling converted into the abodes of peace and worship ;—how, on the other hand, the idea of the public and social life which the Basilica had brought with it from Greece—the idea of an irresistible law and universal dominion which had been impressed upon it by the genius of Rome, first found their complete development under the shadow of that faith which was to preserve them both to the new world of Europe. Surely it is no idle fancy, to trace in this transfiguration of the ancient images of Gentile power and civilization, at least a shadow of that higher purpose which ‘ shapes mens’ ends, rough hew them as they will,’—a sign, however faint, of the true spirit of that faith which here found its earliest outward expression. Had unrestrained scope been given to the tendency which strove to assimilate all Christian worship to the outward religious ceremonial of Judaism or Paganism, it might have perpetuated itself by adopting in all cases, as it certainly did in some, the type, if not of the Roman, at least of the Jewish temple. Had the stern indifference to all forms of art prevailed every where, and at all times, during the three first centuries, as it did during the ages of persecution, and in the deserts of the Thebaid, it would probably have swept away outward localities and forms of worship altogether.

A higher spirit, undoubtedly, than either of these tendencies represent, there has always been in the Christian Church, whether latent or expressed ;—a spirit which would make religion to consist not in the identification of things with itself, nor yet in a complete repudiation of them—but in its comprehension and appropriation of them to its own uses ;—which would look upon the world neither as too profane, nor too insignificant, for the regard of Christians, but rather as the very sphere in which Christianity is to live and to triumph. To what extent such a spirit may have co-existed with all the counteracting elements which it must have met in the age of Constantine, we do not pretend to say : but if the view above given be correct, it is precisely such a spirit as this which is represented to us in outward form by the origin of the Christian Basilica. It is precisely such a monument as best befitted* the first public recognition of a religion whose emphatic distinction it was, that

it embraced not one nation only, nor one element of human nature only, but all the nations, and all the various elements of the whole world. The connexion of the details of the Basilica with the popular theory of Church government may possibly have been overstrained—but the very fact of its existence attests the triumph of a principle, far more deeply connected with the cause of Christian freedom, than can be the case with any arrangement of government however liberal. The Gothic Cathedral may have had its origin quite independently of its precursors in Italy, and may have been a far truer exponent of the whole range of Christian feeling; but neither it, nor any other form of Architecture could have won its way into the Christian world, unless the rise of the Basilica had first vindicated the application of Gentile art, whether Roman or Teutonic, to sacred purposes. The selection of the Halls of Justice may have been occasioned by merely temporary and accidental causes; but the mere fact of the selection of such sites or such models, unhallowed by ancient tradition, or primeval awe, was in itself a new phenomenon—was in itself the sign that a Religion was come into the world, confident of its own intrinsic power of consecrating whatever it touched, independently of any outward or external relation whatever.

We cannot take leave of these volumes without an expression of gratitude to the country which has produced them. We often hear alarm at the influx of German literature into England—at the increasing interest taken by the rising generation in works of German philosophy and theology. That Germany has much to answer for in hasty speculation and capricious theorizing, we readily acknowledge; but the Works before us are amongst a thousand proofs that the Germans, as a nation, possess that which we cannot dispense with, unless we appropriate it for ourselves. They teach us by example not only how to collect facts, but how to arrange them. They make us feel that we have gained by criticism at least as much as we have lost; that those who walk in the steps of the great Scholar, who has well been called not the destroyer, but the restorer of Roman History, will give us back more than they have taken from us. The materials were already at hand in the works of Italians or of Englishmen—but what a contrast between Nibby and Niebühr—between Bingham and Bunsen! It is not by translating German works, but by studying them with an English spirit—not by divesting ourselves of our English character, but by lighting it up with the Promethean spark of German research; that the chasm between the two nations can really be bridged over with advantage to either. And we trust

we shall not be suspected of national vanity, if we express our firm conviction, that the English History and Theology which may arise out of such a union would be as much greater than any thing which has yet appeared in Germany, as it would be than any thing which has yet appeared in England; and that so far from any dangerous result to Christian belief, amongst us, there is no prospect, humanly speaking, which holds out so fair a hope of a thoroughly deep and sound appreciation of the true ends and principles of Christianity, both by the spirit and the understanding, in the Church and in the World.

ART. VI.—*Over-Population and its Remedy; or, an Inquiry into the Extent and Causes of the Distress prevailing among the Labouring Classes of the British Islands, and into the Means of Remedying it.* By WILLIAM THOMAS THORNTON. 8vo. London: 1846.

OUR chief subject of difference with Mr Thornton lies in the first word of his title-page, and the first lines of his book. 'By over-population,' he says, 'is to be understood, throughout the following pages, that condition of a country in which part of the inhabitants, though able-bodied and capable of labour, are *permanently* unable to earn a *sufficiency* of the necessaries of life.' We confess ourselves unable to understand this definition; and, even if this be our fault, and not the author's, we wish he had not adopted, as a comprehensive title for the evils which affect the labouring classes, a word which seems to us rather calculated to raise unnecessary controversies than to convey definite ideas. And we are quite sure that if 'over-population' exists among us, Mr Thornton has not succeeded in the difficult task of pointing out its 'remedy.' But, viewing his work as what it more justly might profess to be—an inquiry into many circumstances connected with the 'condition-of-England-question,'—particularly as regards the agricultural classes, with suggestions respecting measures now or lately under consideration for their relief, we have found in it much to instruct us, and not a little to praise, even where we are forced to disagree.

There is one sense, undoubtedly, in which the word 'over-population' may be used with sufficient, if not absolutely strict accuracy. Wherever the bad economy of labour causes it to be expended in part unproductively, there over-population

may be said to exist. If, by the habits of a country, two men, with inferior skill and machinery, are required to execute work which one might perform, the labour of one of the two is redundant. Thus, in agriculture, (to employ the instance which appears most familiar to Mr Thornton, and is generally used by him for the purpose of illustration,) there is a certain proportion between capital and labour which, with the existing appliances of skill and machinery, may be termed the most advantageous. In the present state of agricultural skill, there is a certain extent of land which a certain number of labourers can cultivate to the greatest advantage; that is, with the greatest net return above wages and profits. The same land, divided between a much greater number of Cottiers, cultivating it by the spade, might yield a larger gross return; but the net return, over and above the wages of the cultivator, would be much less. Labour is not so productive in the latter as in the former case; and the land is over-peopled. In this sense, the handloom weavers form a class of redundant workmen. Ireland is over-peopled by Cottiers. Every country, indeed, suffers more or less from the same evil; for there is probably no country where, in some department or other of industry, many more hands are employed than would be necessary to create the greatest amount of surplus wealth, if labour were properly divided, and existing skill properly applied. Inveterate habits, monopolies, customs influencing the tenure of land, the slowness of the process by which surplus labour is absorbed, after the derangements occasioned by changes in fashion, and improvements in machinery,—all these are causes tending to produce and maintain ‘over-population,’ in this sense of the word.

But this is not Mr Thornton’s meaning. He is not one of those who consider that the waste of labour is in itself, and of necessity, an evil. He is an admirer, as we shall by-and-by see, of the system of cultivation by small proprietors, or small tenants, under which a large proportion of labour is necessarily expended with little or no return. And we are fully prepared to agree with him thus far,—that the condition of a community in which much labour is expended for small returns is not, necessarily, an unhappy one. We can imagine a state of society in which industry, and skill, and intelligence, are exerted to the utmost pitch—in which capital is accumulated in comparatively few hands, and applied in the most advantageous manner—in which much surplus wealth exists, and riches and luxury abound—and yet the labourers, the mass of the community, may be habitually poor, discontented, improvident. On the other hand, it is equally possible to suppose a community in which land is

divided into small portions—in which great manufacturing and commercial capitals do not exist—in which very little surplus wealth is produced—and yet in which the bulk of the people are morally and physically thriving. Over-population, in countries like these, is only theoretically an evil, in as far as it interferes with the production of wealth. But the production of wealth is by no means so important to the real well-being of a nation, as its distribution. To attempt to stop the accumulation of capital, the consolidation of farms, the economising of labour, where the tendencies of things are working in that direction, would be simply madness. But it might be scarcely less unwise to exchange existing happiness for prospects of wealth; and to convert (could such a thing be done) the people of Tuscany, Flanders, and the better parts of Switzerland, into communities made up of capitalists and day labourers.

‘Over-population,’ he says again, ‘may be shortly defined to be a deficiency of employment for those who live by labour; or a redundancy of the labouring class above the number of persons that the fund applied to the remuneration of labour can maintain in comfort.’ If so, the mere fact that a number of agricultural labourers and their families are supported wholly or partly out of the poor-rates, in our agricultural districts, is no proof of general over-population; though Mr Thornton sometimes appears to treat it as such. So long as paupers are supported out of the rent, or surplus revenue of the land, it is plain that, in a country not exporting raw produce, pauperism does not indicate a redundant population. The Dorsetshire landlord is said to spend a fifth or a sixth of his rent in the support of the poor: That is to say, a proportion of the raw produce which is raised from his land is used or exchanged for food and clothing for paupers. If the paupers did not exist, he would expend it on maintaining additional servants, or in procuring comforts and luxuries. These must be either of English manufacture, or foreign produce, purchased with English manufactures. Either way, the income which he now devotes to the maintenance of paupers in his parish, would maintain an additional population, either as servants or artizans. If his parish be ‘over-peopled,’ then Lancashire is under-peopled to the same extent. This is a case of vicious distribution of the funds for the maintenance of labour, not of *general* over-population. And thus Mr Thornton himself remarks, that in Kent, (which previously swarmed with paupers,) ‘since the passing of the new Poor-Law, the rate of wages has not fallen, but remains at the old amount of 10s. or 12s. a week; thus showing, that previously, while so many of the poor were maintained in idleness, the funds for profitably em-

'plying them were not really wanting, but were merely misdirected.'

But neither in a country exporting raw produce is pauperism an evidence of general over-population, so long as the paupers are maintained out of the surplus produce of the soil; although the phenomena seem, at first sight, still more to favour the popular notion. The Polish proprietor finds his estates burdened with the maintenance of many aged and infirm, probably of a few unemployed able-bodied persons of the serf or labouring class. The surplus produce out of which he supports them, would, if they were out of the way, be exported, and exchanged for articles of luxury, to be consumed by himself and his family. But do these pauper families, simply because they are unproductive, prove that Poland is over-peopled? If so, troops of retainers of noble houses—numerous and burdensome standing armies—all the idle classes, maintained out of the surplus produce of the soil,—might equally be regarded as instances of 'over-population.' England, in the fifteenth century, was a country exporting raw produce. She had, it may be, fewer paupers in proportion to her population than now. But out of her four millions of people, she had some thirty thousand Monks and Friars, and twice or three times as many idle followers of the great households, with sword and target. Surely it would be an abuse of words to say that England was therefore 'over-peopled,' at a period when, if the scanty chronicles of the poor say true, wages were higher than they have been either before or since.

Pauperism, therefore, does not of itself prove over-population; to which truth, indeed, Mr Thornton himself, though sometimes forgetful of it, bears testimony; as when he speaks of the great number of paupers in the most flourishing parts of Switzerland and in Holland,—countries which even he does not pronounce 'over-peopled.' The true question, to suit Mr Thornton's own definition, is, whether the idle or exuberant population presses on the fund for the maintenance of labour; and consequently causes the labourers to be maintained in less 'comfort,' to earn less wages, than would otherwise be the case? Are wages, whether in England or in Poland, lower than they would be if pauperism were removed—not merely indirectly, on account of the greater stimulus which a different system might give to industrious habits, but directly, because part of the wages are taxed to support paupers?

This is a question, which it would be extremely difficult satisfactorily to answer. Perhaps it is in its very nature unsusceptible of a complete solution. Yet the affirmative answer, assumed as an hypothesis, forms the very basis of Mr Thornton's

theory; and of all those theories which make over-population the main cause of national suffering. When we say that labourers are more numerous than the fund for their maintenance can maintain *in comfort*, we mean, in nine cases out of ten, no more than this—that the labourers are not so well off as we would have them. But, if we are to prove over-population by the absence of *comfort*, we must have some more accurate definition of the word. The real test cannot be Mr Thornton's, or Mr Alison's imaginary standard of comfort. Comfort is one thing in the cottage of the English field labourer—another in the lodging of the town artizan—another in the Irish hut—another among the Lazzaroni basking on the shore of the Mediterranean. And the notions of comfort which prevail in these several localities are the same, generally speaking, which have prevailed there at least for some generations. How was the standard originally fixed? Mr Thornton answers by a rapid and well-drawn sketch of the vicissitudes and present condition of the labouring-classes in various parts of Europe; avowedly with the view of establishing the proposition,—that 'the originally happy condition of the peasantry has been the cause of its own continuance; that the people are comfortable now because they have never been otherwise; and because the wish to retain their advantages has prevented them from increasing beyond the number that could be *adequately* provided for.' *Adequately* to what purpose, and according to what standard? Where is the *datum* line of adequate subsistence for the labouring-class, every deviation from which for the worse, is to be taken as a symptom of over-population,—as every deviation for the better is, we suppose, of under-population; for there is certainly as much reason for the one conclusion as for the other? Why has the Norwegian peasant his cottage and land, his four meals, his meat and beer, his strong homespun woollens, and sound education? Because he and his forefathers have so willed it, says Mr Thornton. Why does the Neapolitan clothe himself in rags, and subsist on garlic and macaroni? Because he and his ancestors have chosen to remain lazzaroni ever since the fall of the Roman Empire, for any thing we know to the contrary. 'Becoming inured to misery, they likewise became careless of the future. They are wretched now because wretchedness has, during many generations, been the portion of their forefathers.'

But it is obviously a loose way of reasoning to argue that Italy is therefore over-peopled; Norway (we presume) under-peopled. For any proof that Mr Thornton adduces, labour may have been equally dear in the latter country—equally cheap in the former—the standard of comfort the same as now in both, for

a period extending much further back in history than it is worth while to enquire. And what is true of those countries respectively, is true of different parts of England. When Mr Thornton maintains that Dorsetshire is over-peopled, because agricultural wages in that county are said to be seven shillings a-week,—considerably less than the average of England,—we might just as well argue that Northumberland and Lincolnshire are under-peopled, because their wages are full as much above the average. All that is really shown by the fact is, that a different condition of the labouring-class exists in the several counties.

Population can be shown to be redundant in Mr Thornton's sense, only where there has been a considerable and permanent fall in the rate of wages. Wherever this has occurred, there has been either an undue increase of labourers, or a diminution of the fund for their maintenance. Suppose, for instance, a sudden and copious accession to their numbers: wages would fall; their condition would deteriorate; so would their productive powers. The work which had been formerly well done by two would now be ill done by three. And at last the rate of wages would become permanently fixed at a lower standard. During the state of transition, such a country might properly be described as labouring under an excess of population. But when wages and habits had settled at a new level; when the wealthier generation had gone by; when all things had adapted themselves to the altered circumstances; though the later state of the country would be far less happy than the earlier, still the term 'over-population' would cease to describe that state. There might be hands enough, and no more, to do the existing work with existing skill, and for wages suited to the existing standard.

Could it therefore be shown, which we do not believe it can, that the condition of the labouring classes in England has, in the course of some generations, undergone that change for the worse which we have here supposed *immediate*, it would still be a careless and unmeaning use of the word to call England 'over-peopled.' Nor is this a mere philosophical cavil. The notion we here impugn has been the source of many mistakes, and is likely to produce more. It was, perhaps, from ideas similar to Mr Thornton's—namely, that the poor-laws, under the old system of abuses, produced a permanent over-population—that many of those who supported their reform, entertained the belief that its direct effect would be to raise wages. The expectation, we fear, was fallacious. And the disappointment of hopes which had no substantial foundation, may have contributed to direct a portion of popular feeling against a law of which the real value lay far deeper,—in the indirect influence it was intended to

exercise, first on the moral, and ultimately on the physical, well-being of the people.

Mr Thornton, however, thinks it sufficient for his purpose, if he can show that there has *at any time* been a depreciation of the condition of the English peasantry. He carefully examines Sir F. Eden's well-known storehouse of statistical facts, and traces the condition of the mass of the people, even from the Saxon times to the present;—following the same course, and arriving at many of the same conclusions, with Malthus. Both allow, that in as far as the accessible evidence goes, the reward of labour was never so high as in the fifteenth century: both are forced—if any reliance is to be placed on tables of wages and prices—to fix the golden age of 'merry old England' in the middle of the obscure and turbulent period of the 'wars of the Roses.' But Mr Malthus, while admitting the evidence, regarded the high wages of the reigns of Henry VI. and VII., from whatever cause they may have arisen, as exceptional. He thinks, that compared with what they were both before and after, 'they were evidently peculiar, and could not, therefore, be permanent.' Mr Thornton, while he cannot deny, what the same authorities prove, that this temporary elevation followed an 'extraordinary rise,' endeavours to account for it by an extraordinary extension of employment—a very easy mode of getting over a difficulty, for it is purely an hypothesis—yet seems anxious to represent it as the normal state of the English peasantry;—to establish that their subsequent decline must be regarded as an abandonment of the 'high social position' which they had attained, as a proof of their redundant numbers,—as an 'exchange of the ease and comfort which they had once enjoyed, for difficulties and privations.' 'How has it happened,' he asks, 'that the numbers of the people are now, and have been throughout the last three hundred and sixty years, in excess to their *former proportion* to the amount of employment? For the present *degradation* of the English labourer has not been effected within a recent period; the golden age of the working class was followed *without any interval* by the iron age which still subsists.'—Now if this be so—if in point of fact wages fell, more than three centuries ago, from their boasted height to a state of depression which has continued ever since—of what possible practical utility can it be to compare the present condition of things with one so utterly past and forgotten? How very idle a proposition it is, were it a true one, that England is now over-peopled—in comparison, not with the times of our fathers and forefathers—but in comparison with the England of Chaucer and Lydgate!

That the fall from this state of prosperity *was* great and rapid,

Mr Thornton is forced to show from the same authorities on which he relies for the prosperity itself. From the end of the reign of Henry VII. to the middle of that of Elizabeth, wages, generally speaking, seem to have had a downward tendency. Nor are the causes easy of ascertainment. Even Malthus rather evades than meets the question; and Mr Thornton's solution is not convincing. The change from agriculture to sheep-farming may have rendered population temporarily abundant in some districts; the conversion of a great number of small owners of long leases, particularly under the monasteries, into farmers at rack-rent, (a change not yet completed in the western parts of England;) the disuse of the custom of employing large bodies of idle retainers,—all these circumstances may have had a more or less injurious effect for the time on the condition of the labourers. Even with the high authority of Malthus against us, we are much inclined to think that the fall in the value of the precious metals, which followed the discovery of America, had more share than any other cause, in producing that continuous and steady fall of real wages which took place during the greater part of the sixteenth century.

Be this, however, as it may, the condition of the agricultural labourer 'began sensibly to improve' towards the end of the same century. 'Although,' says Mr Thornton, 'agricultural labourers were now raised a good deal above the depth to which they had sunk, they were very far from having regained the prosperity which they had once enjoyed;' but he should have added, that this 'once' refers only to the exceptional period already mentioned. There seems to have been a stationary or declining period about the time of the Rebellion; when for several years very high prices prevailed. But from 1670 to 1770 or thereabouts, there was a decided increase of comfort; and this seems to have been the period of the principal changes in the outward condition and habits of the labourer, from those of earlier times—the substitution of wheaten for inferior bread—glass windows for shutters—finer for coarser clothing. Yet, says Mr Thornton, throughout the first half of the reign of George III., the condition of the English peasantry 'must have presented a very melancholy aspect to all who could perceive how much the foundations of their independence were undermined.' Why undermined? Mr Thornton himself shows that they had enough to subsist on, and work to do. The ordinary traditions of the time represent them rather as a coarse, bold, thriving race, than as suffering, oppressed, and half starved. But we are to look still further, it seems, for the threatened period of deterioration, which appears ever to recede

before us. In 1795, it is true, bad times for the peasantry began. War, and bad seasons, and the anti-jacobin terrors,—which produced the worst tampering with principle in the poor-law administration that had yet been seen,—told heavily against them. ‘Many persons living can well recollect how severe the sufferings of the labouring class were at that time, and with what difficulty they continued to struggle through them.’ But the evil was only temporary. About 1810, wages again began to rise. ‘Agricultural wages were considerably higher between 1811 and 1820, than in the ten years immediately preceding.’ Let us proceed to the next decennium. Money wages fell (1820—1823,) but not in proportion to the fall in the price of provisions. ‘From a comparison of wages and prices, it does not appear that the labourer’s condition was now *further* deteriorated,’ (we have just seen that it had been *improving* for ten years before.) ‘On the contrary, it was probably, if any thing, a little *improved*, though the alteration either way was too small to deserve notice.’ This brings us to 1830. No one, we think, will suppose that any changes which have taken place since that year, amount to a substantial fall of wages, or deterioration of the condition of the peasantry. And now, with Mr Thornton’s own chronicle of wages fairly analysed, we are surely entitled to ask our readers, where is the evidence of that falling off in the condition of the English people, which is the very foundation of his theory? We have not prayed in aid the evidence afforded by the advance of manufacturing industry: we restrict our enquiry to the field selected by our author himself, that of agricultural labour. And we ask again, on what authority is it that he affirms, that ‘during the last forty or fifty years, the English peasantry have been continually and rapidly *declining* ;’ when his own Statistics prove, as we have shown, that, from 1811 to 1830, agricultural wages were gradually *rising*? The truth is, we cannot help suspecting, that Mr Thornton began by assuming his hypothesis of a redundant population and declining wages, and afterwards examined the evidence on the subject. Much too fair and honest to mis-state that evidence, and yet too wedded to his theory to modify it, he has suffered himself to slip into the inconsistency of proving one thing, and then assuming another, as the foundation of further argument.

The conclusion to which we are irresistibly led is, that there is no proof of the condition of agricultural labourers in England having deteriorated for the last three centuries at least. What may have been their condition in earlier times, is matter for anti-

quarian investigation, rather than of real importance at present. To say that in England there is now a 'redundancy of population,' compared with England under the Plantagenets, or England under the Heptarchy, is mere shadowy assumption, utterly unserviceable towards any of the serious purposes of the day. The urgency of present questions is too great, the demand on the energy and resources of every well-wisher to his country, too pressing, to admit of trifling with subjects of such vital interest. If art did less, nature did far more for the individual man, than she is permitted to do at the present day. When Manchester was a village, when wolves and bears were chased at Highgate, when three-fourths of England were covered with forests, the mere freedom of space and elbow-room was in itself a source of many pleasures, of which the very memory is faded away. Nor was the labourer's physical condition to be deplored. He had, in general, abundance of coarse food; for the best lands alone were cultivated, and inferior kinds of stock were cheaply fed in the woods and commons. His dress and lodging were miserable enough, no doubt; but probably less so in proportion, than those of the Baron. His life was, indeed, exposed to fearful evils from which we now live in happy exemption;—famines very different from their so-called successors—epidemics of a very different order from our cholera—lawless violences—savage laws. But the chance of great catastrophes never goes for much in the estimate of human happiness. The very serf of those days, except when he happened to quarrel with the royal foresters, was, in some respects, freer, and therefore happier, than the modern hind;—from whom the common, the village green, the field-path, have one by one been taken by law, until he is as effectually barred out from the enjoyment of nature, as the cotton-spinner shut up in his factory. These times can never return; but the great substitute for the physical enjoyments of earlier days is to be found in intellectual development and culture.

Fortunately, Mr Thornton's misconceptions of the subject, if such they be, lie on the surface only, and affect his judgment on theoretical subjects rather than on practical ones. Assuredly he is no sentimental economist,—attributing the sufferings of the poor to the hard-heartedness of the rich, and the grinding tyranny of capital; or to any other of the false grounds on which the easy philanthropy of the day loves to expatiate. No one can more plainly assert the stern and unpopular truth, that the labourers are themselves responsible, in the long run, for most of the evils which beset their condition. No one more distinctly

shows that the ultimate causes of prosperity or suffering lie in the habits and the wills of men themselves—formed and exercised from generation to generation. It may, therefore, be urged, that his use of the word ‘over-population’ is harmless, even if not philosophically accurate. But, unfortunately, it gives encouragement to errors from which Mr Thornton may be free; but which are easily deducible from the expressions he has permitted himself to employ. The very name of over-population is provocative of quackery. It invites the projector and the speculator. A redundant population, on the one hand; on the other, unpeopled continents, waste lands, bogs, fens to reclaim—swamps to drain, roads to make, factories to construct,—these things stand in such inviting approximation, that it is no wonder there are many who cannot be brought to look beyond the first and most attractive project. And thus, fallacies refuted day after day by sad experience, are again and again reduced into experiment; for there are some follies which never grow old—some speculators who, after the bursting of an hundred bubbles, will still watch with unaltered faith and enthusiasm the stately outset of the hundred-and-first.

If it be true, as Mr Thornton believes, that the source of the evils which afflict the labouring classes is mainly in themselves; if we are able to show that the price of a man’s industry is ultimately determined by the value which he himself sets upon it,—by his own self-respect and self-restraint—then it is evident that the remedies, or pretended remedies, may be classed under two heads. The first are those which attack the root of the evil; the latter, its outward symptoms. The first are directed against the causes which produce the anomalies complained of; the latter, to redress the anomalies themselves. The first resemble a medical treatment founded on principle; the latter, the exhibition of specifics, or, in plain English, quack medicines. Education, well-regulated poor-laws—(so far as these are not simply measures of police,) laws interfering with contracts, and regulating times and conditions of labour, sanitary provisions, institutions for the encouragement of saving;—all these, and many more, whether well or ill conceived, belong to the first class. The effect they may produce—or by far the greatest part—must be indirect, not direct. They must act by reforming the labourer, not by improving his outward condition. They may render him fit to earn higher wages, but they do not, in the first instance, raise his rate of wages. They are to give him greater strength and higher faculties; but they do not increase his remuneration irrespectively of augmented strength and powers. Poor-law systems of indiscriminate relief—emigration,

home colonization, allotments, public works,—these belong to the second class. They are empirical remedies, the object of which is directly to ameliorate his condition, not to render him capable of securing a better condition for himself.

Omitting free-trade, as now, happily, a *fait accompli*, let us take a glance at the other remedies of both descriptions here chiefly dwelt on. That Mr Thornton is a supporter of the principle of the Poor-Laws' Amendment will easily be supposed; after the indications we have given of his views respecting the original causes of that uneasy state of the labouring classes which he calls over-population. We do not purpose making any extracts from this part of his work; but those who read it, if they do not find much that is original on this hacknied subject, will find that his views are enforced with simplicity and straightforwardness, which may, perhaps, produce an effect in quarters where severer logic would be thrown away. His home-thrusts against the false benevolence and popular cant of the day, will come with greater force from one whom the general tenor of his book shows to be any thing rather than an adherent of the well-abused sect of modern Economists. And he claims for himself no more than that common justice which he is ready to show to others. 'One who devotes a volume to an inquiry into the best means of promoting the welfare of the poor, may fairly claim credit for taking some interest in the subject, however widely his views respecting it may differ from those of his critics. He may entertain all the opinions expressed above with regard to poor-laws, and yet be a sincere and very ardent friend of the poor. Measures for increasing the dependence of the poor upon charity can only benefit one portion of the labouring class, in the same proportion as they injure another; and, if carried far, must inevitably involve all in ruin. The true way to improve the condition of the able-bodied is, in all cases short of the want of the necessaries of life, to throw them entirely on their own resources; but, at the same time, to augment these resources to the utmost—to make their own industry their sole dependence, but to enlarge the field within which that industry may be exerted. To make them public pensioners, is at best only to alter the distribution of the fund for the payment of wages; but, to produce any unalloyed advantage, the equilibrium between that fund and the number of persons dependent upon it must be restored—the one must be augmented, or the other must be diminished.'

Of Education, considered merely with reference to its indirect action in improving the habits and strengthening the character, and thereby putting into men's own hands the means to improve

their economical position, Mr Thornton speaks with great decision and plainness. He knows that 'almost any intellectual exercise is better than none at all;' and he knows the reason—not because of the mere value of the knowledge acquired, but because no knowledge whatever can be acquired without exertion, and discipline, and self-restraint. No man who does not start with this conviction can be hearty in the great work of our day. 'In the largest sense of the word,' he says, 'every one of the measures already recommended in these pages for the advancement of the labouring class, may be regarded as contributing to education; for it is only by its influence on the mind, that an accession of comforts can tend to dissuade people from premature marriages. Even mere schooling, however, is calculated to have some effect of the same kind. Whatever exercises the mind, develops its powers; mental power can only be expanded in thought; and a man who thinks at all, is never so likely to think as when he is about to act. To whatever sort of culture, therefore, the mind be subjected, there is every probability that more or less free thought will be among the products.' Thus much for the slowest in its operations, most distant in its fruits, and least encouraging to the sanguine and the impatient—but assuredly the most substantial of all the remedies which wisdom can suggest—for the evils of our present condition.

With similar good sense and moderation Mr Thornton speaks of sanitary regulations, 'short time' acts, and other interferences with the habits or the contracts of labouring people. At the same time, we wish he had devoted a little more attention to the principle of this class of public measures. They form, in truth, one of the most important topics of the day. England has been long in unlearning its inveterate prejudices, in favour of the interference of government with private enterprise, to protect particular classes and interests. Perhaps it has now to learn the lesson, that there are other objects for the sake of which government may be rightly called on to interfere, to an extent as yet unusual. When the 'let-alone' policy was first advocated by Economists, the interference which they had in view, and denounced as noxious, was altogether of the first description. Their earliest endeavours were directed towards liberating society from the sordid tyranny of Class Interests, employing the State as their engine of selfish oppression. It is not unnatural, but it is surely illogical, to extend the same objections to a species of interference exerted with an entirely different object. Spain prohibited the cultivation of the vine in the Americas in order to protect the Spanish vine-growers. China prohibits the cultivation of opium

as a drug pernicious to public health and morality. Whether China be right or wrong, it is obvious that to condemn her policy on the same ground on which we condemn that of Spain is to confound matters essentially different. There are already instances too numerous and notorious to require enumeration, in which governments interfere to prevent or limit contracts—not with a view to the supposed pecuniary advantage of one or other of the contracting parties—not to protect the public in general from nuisance or inconvenience—but simply to protect the contractor himself from the consequences of an engagement fraught with physical or moral evils, which he is unable to appreciate; still more reasonably, to protect others from being driven by the hard necessity of competition to bind themselves, knowingly, to their own prejudice. It is a mere evasion to say that these are exceptional cases. Once admit the principle, that government may rightly exercise such influence—and the usage of every day sanctions it—and every case seeming to call for it, is to be argued on its own merits. And so it must be with reference to the limitation of the hours of labour—the most knotty question of this class now before the public. Its supporters urge that the duration of labour which men will engage to undergo is too much for their bodily and mental health. They say that even high wages, thus acquired, bring little of blessing with them to men spiritless from over-exertion, in homes rendered squalid and uncomfortable; because there is neither time, nor inclination left for the exercise of household economy. They say that hasty marriages, early deaths, constant improvidence, brutish and irrational habits of living, are the necessary concomitants of a state of things in which the whole six days are devoted to toil. They even affirm that man deteriorates with these evil influences, not only in his higher qualities, but also in his inferior capacity as a machine of production, and that with shorter labour he might do more or better work. The time is surely past for answering these arguments by mere assertions of general doctrine. Fair reasons must be given for supposing that the point has been already reached, (some point there evidently must be,) at which further interference would do more harm, by diminishing the productiveness of the fund for the maintenance of labour, than it could do good, by its influence on the character of the labourer. And, since every step which the legislature has hitherto taken in the same direction has been met with similar objections and denunciations, none of which have yet been realized, the burden of proof seems to lie rather on the opponents than supporters of further reform.

To leave the consideration of fundamental remedies, and turn to others of a very different description, we find Mr Thornton attaching even less value to Emigration than we might ourselves be disposed to attribute to it. But if little disposed to embrace this once favourite project, he makes up for it by his admiration of the more modern *panacea* for agricultural evils—small farms, or small allotments. We must, however, distinguish—though Mr Thornton does not—between two very different matters. When he argues, that the subdivision of *farms* would be beneficial to the landlord, because ‘no rents are more punctually paid than those of *cottage allotments*,’ he is certainly in some danger of leading his readers into a confusion exceedingly prevalent on this subject. The subdivision of farms, and the formation of cottage allotments in aid of wages, are altogether different processes;—different in their object, as well as their probable effects. They have absolutely nothing to do with each other; or rather, they are inconsistent schemes. The system of cottage allotments pre-supposes large farms, and a considerable demand for farm labourers. The system of small farms supposes the absence or the scarcity of mere farm labourers as a class, and the general cultivation of the land by the hands of its occupiers.

With regard to cottage allotments, the subject has been already so much canvassed, that we do not intend at present to resume it. The subdivision of farms, to which Mr Thornton appears equally attached, is a matter of far greater consequence, and requires more attentive investigation. He begins by misconceiving, if we understand him rightly, the ordinary economical objection to it. ‘The one thing needful,’ he says, ‘is to make land yield the largest possible surplus, after ‘adequately remunerating the cultivator.’ And small farms, he maintains, yield a larger surplus produce and rent per acre, than large ones. Therefore, ‘labour is much more productive on ‘small farms than on large ones.’ Now, were it even the fact that small farms pay a higher rent per acre than large ones, we have already seen that it would by no means follow that labour was more productive. Twenty Cottiers, by spade cultivation, may make a given number of acres yield a larger return, perhaps a larger rent, than a single farmer and two labourers. But unless the surplus of the return, after paying wages and replacing stock, is greater in the proportion of twenty to three, it is plain that each man’s labour is less productive in the first case than the last. More is drawn from the land by accumulating labour on it. But, after a certain point has been

reached, the greater the quantity of labour, the less is the net return which each man's labour yields. Now it is precisely this net return which makes nations rich. Precisely in proportion to their surplus revenue over the remuneration of the producers, in the shape of profits and wages, is their power to pay taxes, maintain armies, execute great works, besides the mere raw article of population.

So far is clear enough. But when we are investigating the happiness, not the wealth of nations, then, as we have seen already, the prospect becomes far more doubtful; and questions of more difficult solution press upon our attention. It is vain to endeavour to conceal from ourselves the evils of a system under which man's labour is rendered as productive as possible by the assistance of large capitals; but under which the labourer is necessarily dependent entirely on that capital for his employment. Large farms, and a landless peasantry, go inevitably together. And, let us disguise the fact as we may, it is only too true that the landless labourer's condition, is rarely as happy in a mere physical point of view—never as high in the social scale, by reason of the moral qualities which it engenders—as that of the small proprietor, or the farmer with a fixed interest in the soil.

But these are idle comparisons at best. It would be as impossible, we fear, notwithstanding Mr Thornton's persuasives, to subdivide our farms, and scatter our great manufacturing and commercial wealth among more numerous holders, as to stop the progress of human skill and enterprise. Every thing tends the other way;—not only our habits and institutions, but, more especially, all our improvements in mechanical skill and social science. It is needless to expatiate on the advantages which large capitalists have over small ones, in every department of business. However ingenious the arguments Mr Thornton adduces to the contrary, they are too familiarly known to require to be controverted. Now the practical limit to the concentration of capital in few hands—and the only one—is the difficulty of superintending a large business, increasing as the business extends. It is this difficulty, varying in different instances, which, more than any other circumstance, determines the relative amount of capitals ordinarily invested in different kinds of business. Now every improvement in commercial knowledge and practice—communication, locomotion, machinery, and so forth—tends to diminish this difficulty. Banking, for instance, and Bills of Exchange, are inventions which, by simplifying commercial transactions, must have infinitely increased the facility of wielding commercial

capital, and of transferring the trade of the world from pedlars to merchants. It is impossible to conjecture the effect which roads, and canals, and post-offices, and stage-coaches must have had in the same direction. But what shall we say of railways, and the electric telegraph! How enormous must be the advantages which these will afford to the great capitalist, by enabling him to concentrate, under his single direction, far greater forces, and put in practice far greater combinations, than he possibly could before; and how greatly will they tell in his favour in his struggle with his poorer competitor! No one can mistake the tokens of progressive change throughout Britain in this respect. Perhaps one of the most striking economical signs of the times—more so than the increase of farms—is the growing application of large capitals to retail business. Already great retail houses are extending branches over the country; and the ancient race of small shopkeepers is probably doomed to a complete, though gradual, extinction.

As far, then, as human sagacity can forecast, the course of things, unless altered by some revolution, will continue to tend towards the division of society into the classes of landlords, holders of fixed incomes, large capitalists, and labourers. And we know, inasmuch as the like causes in social economy produce the like effects, what peculiar developments, both of good and evil, will be encouraged by the process. There is only one corrective to the tendency in capital to accumulate in few hands, which appears already in action, and which may, not improbably, assume dimensions and importance heretofore unknown. We mean the principle of Commercial Association. Though individual competitors cannot maintain the struggle against large capitalists, there is no reason, except practical difficulties, why numbers acting in co-operation should not. And here also the tendencies of the age are very much towards diminishing those difficulties, and facilitating such unions. The spread of joint-stock companies is a striking innovation on old habits. It is curious that Mr Thornton, in his panegyric on small farms, dwells on the circumstance, that their occupiers are able to form partnerships of this kind; in other words, one of the chief advantages which he discovers in small farms is, that the farmers may, by a process of combination, throw their holdings, as it were, into large ones! He instances the association of small proprietors in France and other countries for purposes of irrigation and drainage—nay even for manufacturing beet-root sugar, and making large cheeses. These instances are curious, precisely because they are directly contrary to his own conclusions. They show men's practical sense of the advantages of large operations in agriculture; and the struggle which small

capitalists will make to get out, as it were, of their natural position, and share in the advantages of large ones. There is no class of experiments for which we are inclined to form such hearty wishes of success; or from which, could they be realized, we should prognosticate so much of good to society.

But we must conclude,—leaving untouched some remedial topics, at present, much in discussion; but which the reader will find, for the most part, well disposed of by Mr Thornton. His book forms a useful addition to the means of information regarding the philosophy of social life, and we therefore recommend it to public notice and favour.

ART. VII.—1. *Des Pensées de Pascal. Rapport à L'Académie Française sur la nécessité d'une nouvelle édition de cet ouvrage.* Par M. V. COUSIN. 8vo. Paris: 1843.

2. *Pensées, Fragments, et Lettres de Blaise Pascal: publiés pour la première fois conformément aux manuscrits originaux, en grande partie inédits.* Par M. PROSPER FAUGÈRE. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris: 1844.

So much has been written of late years respecting Pascal, and so much that is worth reading, that we do not know that we should have been induced to make him the subject of present criticism, had it not been for the appearance of the above remarkable volumes of M. Faugère.

It seems strange to say, that the most popular work of an author who has been dead two hundred years, and who has obtained a world-wide reputation—a work which has passed through numberless editions, and been translated into most European languages—has never been published in an authentic form till now. Yet this is strictly true of the *Pensées de Pascal*.

It is not possible to convey to the reader a just idea of the merits of this improved edition, or the circumstances which led to it, without relating some of the more important incidents of Pascal's life. A formal biography, however, it cannot be necessary to give; for who has not read some account of the life of Blaise Pascal? It will be sufficient briefly to advert to the principal facts of this great man's history, and the dates of their occurrence.

He was born at Clermont, in Auvergne, in the year 1623, and died in the year 1662, at the early age of thirty-nine.

When we think of the achievements which he crowded into that brief space, and which have made his name famous to all generations, we may well exclaim with Corneille, 'A peine a-t-il vécu, quel nom il a laissé!'

It is well known that Pascal exhibited from the earliest childhood the most precocious proofs of inventive genius, especially in the department of mathematics. Having, if we may believe the universally received tradition, been willingly kept in ignorance of Geometry, lest his propensity in that direction should interfere with the prosecution of other branches of knowledge, his self-prompted genius discovered for itself the elementary truths of the forbidden science. At twelve years of age, he was surprised by his father in the act of demonstrating, on the pavement of an old hall, where he used to play, and by means of a rude diagram, traced by a piece of coal, a proposition which corresponded to the thirty-second of the First Book of Euclid.* At the age of sixteen, he composed a little tractate on the Conic Sections, which provoked the mingled incredulity and admiration of Descartes. At nineteen, he invented his celebrated Arithmetical Machine; and at the age of six-and-twenty, he had composed the greater part of his mathematical works, and made those brilliant experiments in Hydrostatics and Pneumatics which have associated his name with those of Torricelli and Boyle, and ranked him amongst the first philosophers of his age. Yet, strange to say, he now suddenly renounced the splendid career to which his genius so unequivocally invited him, and gave himself up to totally different studies. This was principally attributable to that strong religious impulse which was imparted to his mind at this period—rendered deeper by early experience in the school of affliction. From the age of eighteen, he was a perpetual sufferer. In 1647, when only in his twenty-fourth year, he was attacked by paralysis. His ill health was mainly, if not wholly, occasioned by his devotion to study; and of him it is literally true, that his mind consumed his body.

So complete was his abandonment of science, that he never returned to it but on one memorable occasion, and then only for a short interval. We allude, of course, to the remarkable problems which he solved respecting the curve called the Cycloid. The accounts which have been transmitted to us by his sister, of the manner in which these investigations were suggested and completed—accounts which are authenticated by a letter of his

* His sister, Madame Perier, has left an interesting and circumstantial account of this matter, in the life of her brother.

own to Fermat—strongly impress us with the vigour and brilliancy of his genius. We are assured that, after long abandonment of mathematics, his attention was directed to this subject by a casual train of thought suggested in one of the many nights which pain made sleepless. The thoughts thus suddenly originated, his inventive mind rapidly pursued to all the brilliant results in which they terminated; and in the brief space of eight days the investigations were completed. Partly in compliance with the fashion of the age, and partly from the solicitation of his friend the Duke de Roannes, he concealed for a time the discoveries at which he had arrived, and offered the problems for solution to all the mathematicians of Europe, with a first and second prize to successful candidates. If no solution were offered in three months, Pascal promised to furnish his own. Several were forwarded, but as none, in the estimation of the judges, completely fulfilled the conditions of the challenge, Pascal redeemed his pledge by publishing his own, under the name of Amos Dettonville,—an anagram of Louis de Montalte, the name under which the ‘Provincial Letters’ had appeared. This was in 1658-9, when he was thirty-six years of age.

With this brief exception, Pascal may be said to have practically abandoned science from the age of twenty-six. Yet he did not at once become a religious recluse. For some years he lived a cheerful, and even gay, though never a dissipated life, in Paris, in the centre of literary and polite society, loved and admired by a wide circle of friends, and especially by his patron, the Duke de Roannes. To the accomplished sister of this nobleman, M. Faugère conjectures (as we think plausibly) that Pascal was secretly attached, but, from timidity and humility, ‘never told his love.’ Perhaps, in part, from the melancholy which this hopeless attachment inspired, but certainly much more in consequence of the deeper religious convictions, produced by a memorable escape from an appalling death, in 1654, his indifference to the world increased; and he at length sought for solitude at Port Royal, already endeared to him by the residence there of his sister Jacqueline.

Here it is well known he produced his immortal ‘Provincial Letters;’ and, when death cut short his brief career, was meditating an extensive work on the fundamental truths of religion,—especially on the existence of God and the evidences of Christianity,—for the completion of which he would have required ‘ten years of health and leisure.’ An outline of the work had been sometimes (and on one occasion somewhat fully) imparted in conversation to his friends, but no part of it was ever completed. Nothing was found after

his death but detached 'Thoughts' (interspersed with some on other subjects) on the principal topics appropriated to such a work. They were the stones of which the building was to have consisted, many of them unhewn, and some few such as the builder, had he lived, would no doubt have laid aside. The form in which the Thoughts were put together comported but too well with their fragmentary character. It appears that he did not even use a Commonplace Book; but when, after profound meditation, any thought struck him as worth recording, he hastily noted it on any scrap of paper that came to hand, often on the backs of old letters; these he strung together on a file, or tied up in bundles, and left them till better health and untroubled leisure should permit him to evoke a new creation out of this chaos. It is a wonder, therefore, that the *Pensées* of Pascal have come down to us at all. Never, surely, was so precious a freight committed to so crazy a bark. The Sybil herself was not more careless about those leaves on which she inscribed her prophetic truths, than was Pascal about those which contained the results of his meditations. Of these results, however, we are in part defrauded, by something far worse than either the fragility of the materials on which they are inscribed, or their utter want of arrangement. Many of the 'Thoughts' are themselves only half developed; others, as given us in the literal copy of M. Faugère, break off in the middle of a sentence, even of a word. Some casual interruption—frequently, no doubt, some paroxysm of pain, to which the great author, in his latter years, was incessantly subject—broke the thread of thought, and left the web imperfect for ever.

It is humiliating to think of the casualties which, possibly in many cases, have robbed posterity of some of the most precious fruits of the meditations of the wise; perhaps arrested trains of thought which would have expanded into brilliant theories or grand discoveries;—trains which, when the genial moment of inspiration has passed, it has been found impossible to recall; or which, if recalled up to the point at which they were broken off, terminate only in a wall of rock, in which the mountain path, which had been before so clearly seen, exists no longer. It is humiliating to think that a fit of the toothache, or a twinge of the gout, *might* have thus arrested—no more to return—the opening germ of conjecture, which led on to the discovery of the Differential Calculus, or the Theory of Gravitation. The condition of man, in this respect, affords, indeed, one striking proof of that combined 'greatness and misery' of his nature, on which Pascal so profoundly meditated. It is wonderful that a being, such as he, should achieve so much; it is humiliating that he

must depend on such casualties for success. On the precarious control which even the greatest men have over their own minds, Pascal himself strikingly says,—‘The mind of this sovereign of the world is not so independent as not to be discomposed by the first *tintamarre* that may be made around him. It does not need the roar of artillery to hinder him from thinking; the creaking of a vane or a pulley will answer the purpose. Be not surprised that he reasons ill just now; a fly is buzzing in his ears—it is amply sufficient to render him incapable of sound deliberation. If you wish him to discover truth, be pleased to chase away that insect who holds his reason in check, and troubles that mighty intellect which governs cities and kingdoms! *Le plaisant dieu que voila! O ridicolosissimo eroe!*’*

On the imperfect sentences and half-written words, which are now printed in the volumes of M. Faugère, we look with something like the feelings with which we pore on some half-defaced inscription on an ancient monument—with a strange commixture of curiosity and veneration; and, whilst we wonder what the unfinished sentences may mean, we mourn over the malicious accident which has, perhaps, converted what might have been an aphorism of profoundest importance into a series of unmeaning cyphers. One of the last things, assuredly, which we should think of doing with such fragments, would be to attempt to alter them in any way; least of all, to supplement them, and to divine and publish Pascal’s meaning. There have been learned men, who have given us supplements to the lost pieces of some ancient historians;—erudite Freinsheimiuses, who hand us a huge bale of indifferent Latin, and beg us only to think it Livy’s lost *Decades*. But what man would venture to supplement Pascal? Only such, it may be supposed, as would feel no scruple in scouring an antique medal, or a worthy successor of those Monks who obliterated manuscript pieces of Cicero, that they might inscribe them with some edifying legend.

Alas! more noted people than these were scarcely more scrupulous in the case of Pascal. His friends decided that the fragments which he had left behind him, imperfect as they were, were far too valuable to be consigned to oblivion; and so far all the world will agree with them. If, further, they had selected whatever appeared in any degree coherent, and printed these *verbatim et literatim*, in the best order they could de-

* *Faugère*, tom. ii. p. 54. It may be proper to observe, that all our citations from the *Pensées* are from* this new and solely authentic edition.

vise, none would have censured, and all would have thanked them. But they did much more than this; or rather, they did both much more and much less. They deemed it not sufficient to give Pascal's Remains with the statement, that they were but Fragments; that many of the thoughts were very imperfectly developed; that none of them had had the advantage of the author's revision,—apologies for any deficiencies with which the world would have been fully satisfied; but they ventured upon mutilations and alterations of a most unwarrantable description. In innumerable instances, they changed words and phrases; in many others, they left out whole paragraphs, and put a sentence or two of their own in the place of them; they supplemented what they deemed imperfect with a prefatory exordium or a prefatory conclusion, without any indication as to what were the respective ventures in this rare species of literary copartnery. It must have been odd to see this committee of critics sitting in judgment on Pascal's style, and deliberating with what alterations, additions, and expurgations it would be safe to permit the author of the *Provincial Letters* to appear in public. Arnauld, Nicole, and the Duke de Roannes were certainly no ordinary men; but they were no more capable of divining the thoughts which Pascal had not expressed, or of improving the style where he had expressed them, than of completing a sketch of Raphael.

It appears that, large as was the Editorial discretion they assumed, or rather, large as was their want of all discretion, they had contemplated an enterprise still more audacious—nothing less than that of completing the entire work which Pascal had projected,—partly out of the materials he had left, and partly from what their own ingenuity might supply. It even appears that they had actually commenced this heterogeneous structure; and an amusing account has been left by M. Perier, both of the progress the builders of this Babel had made, and of the reasons for abandoning the design. 'At last,' says he, 'it was resolved to reject the plan, because it was felt to be *almost impossible though roughly* to enter into the thoughts and the plan of the author, and, above all, of an author who was no more; and because it would not have been the work of M. Pascal, but a work altogether different—*un ouvrage tout différent!*' Very different indeed! If this naïve expression had been intended for irony, it would have been almost worthy of Pascal himself.

M. Perier also tells us, that if this plan had but been practicable, it would have been the most perfect of all; but he candidly adds, *il était aussi très-difficile de la bien exécuter*. But though the public was happily spared this fabric of porphyry

and common brick, it will not be supposed by any reader of M. Cousin's *Rapport*, or of M. Faugère's new edition of the *Pensées*, that Pascal's editors did not allow themselves ample license. 'En effet,' says the former, 'toutes les infidélités qu'il est possible de concevoir, s'y rencontrent—omissions, suppositions, altérations.' . . . 'J'ai donné des échantillons nombreux de tous les genres d'altérations—altérations de mots, altérations de tours, altérations de phrases, suppressions, substitutions, additions, compositions arbitraires et absurdes, tantôt d'un paragraphe, tantôt d'un chapitre entier, à l'aide de phrases et de paragraphes étrangers les uns aux autres, et, qui pis est, décompositions plus arbitraires encore et vraiment inconcevables de chapitres qui, dans le manuscrit de Pascal, se présentaient parfaitement liés dans toutes leurs parties et profondément travaillés.*'

Subsequent Editors have taken similar liberties, if not so flagrant. While the original Editors left out many passages, from fear of the Jesuits, Condorcet, in his edition, omitted many of the most devout sentiments and expressions, under the influence of a very different feeling. Infidelity, as well as superstition, has its bigots, who would be well pleased to have their *index expurgatorius* also.† Unhappy Pascal! Between his old Editors and his new, he seemed to be in the condition of the persecuted bigamist in the fable, whose elder wife would have robbed him of all his black hairs, and his younger of the grey. Under such opposite editing, it is hard to say what might not at last have disappeared.

It had, as we have stated, been long felt that no thoroughly trustworthy edition of Pascal's 'Thoughts' had yet been published; that none knew what was precisely his, and what was not. M. Cousin, in the valuable work from which we have just quoted, demonstrated the necessity of a new edition, founded upon a diligent collation of original manuscripts. This task M. Faugère has performed with incredible industry and exactitude, in the two volumes mentioned at the head of the

* *Rapport, Avant-Propos*, pp. ii. ix.

† 'Condorcet, par un préjugé contraire, supprima les passages empreints d'un sentiment de piété ou d'élévation mystique. . . . Par exemple, on ne retrouve pas, dans l'édition de Condorcet, ces pages ravissantes où Pascal, pénétrant dans les plus hautes régions du spiritualisme Chrétien, caractérise la grandeur de la sainteté et de la charité, comparée à la grandeur de la puissance et à celle de l'esprit.—FAUGÈRE, *Introduction*, p. xxix.

present article. We must refer the reader to his interesting 'Introduction' for the proof of this statement. There he has given the details of his editorial labours. Suffice it to say, that every accessible source of information has been carefully ransacked; every fragment of manuscript, whether in Pascal's own hand, or in that of members of his family, has been diligently examined; and every page offers indications of minute attention, even to the most trivial verbal differences. Speaking of the Autograph MS. preserved in the Royal Library at Paris, a folio, into which the original loose leaves are pasted, or, when written on both sides, carefully let into the page—*encadrés*—he says, 'We have read, or rather *studied*, this MS. page by page, 'line by line, syllable by syllable, from the beginning to the 'end; and, with the exception of some words which are illegible, 'it has passed entire into the present edition.' As the public, in the former editions, did not exactly know what was Pascal's and what was not, M. Faugère has been compelled to do what, under other circumstances, it would not have been desirable, and indeed hardly just, to do—what, indeed, any author of reputation would vehemently protest against in his own case. He has been obliged to give every fragment, however imperfect, *literatim et verbatim*. The extracts, as we have said, often terminate in the middle of a sentence, sometimes even of a word. As M. Vinet has justly observed, in relation to this feature of M. Faugère's labours, Pascal himself would hardly have been satisfied 'with either his old editors or the new.' At the same time, it must be confessed, that, apart from this circumstance, it is deeply interesting to contemplate the first rude forms of profound or brilliant thought, as they presented themselves to the ardent mind of Pascal. This M. Faugère has often enabled us to do, more especially in the singular collection of the rough notes for the 'Provincial Letters.'—(Tom. i. p. 293-314.) It is like looking at the first sketch of a great painting of Raphael; or, as M. Vinet observes, 'we are taken into the great sculptor's studio, and behold him at work, chisel in hand.'

M. Cousin, we should think, must be satisfied with the accuracy and completeness of this edition; and also of the insufficiency of his own argument that Pascal was in fact a 'universal sceptic,' who embraced the truths of religion, not as a hypocrite, indeed, but in the exercise of a blind faith—in fact, in a sort of paroxysm of despair; or because he believed, that what he had proved false in physics was still true in morals, 'that nature abhors a vacuum.' M. Cousin, in part, founds his theory on the fact, that the first editors had tamed down some of the more startling statements of Pascal, and omitted others; and that a new edition would reveal the sceptic in his full

dimensions. He must now, we should think, see his error. There is little or nothing which argues Pascal's abiding conviction of the *sufficiency* of the evidence for the fundamental truths of religion, or the Divine origin of Christianity, to be found in the old editions, which does not re-appear in the new, and with much new matter to confirm it. To this subject we shall return, after offering some observations on the genius and character of Pascal.

In one respect, his genius strongly resembled that of a recent subject of our criticism—Leibnitz. His was one of the rare minds, apparently adapted, almost in equal measure, to the successful pursuit of the most diverse departments of philosophy and science—of mathematics and physics—of metaphysics and criticism. Great as was his versatility, it may be doubted, whether in that respect he did not yield somewhat to Leibnitz, as also in his powers of acquisition, and most assuredly in the extent of his knowledge. It is not, however, to be forgotten, that he died at little more than half the age of the veteran philosopher of Germany; and that there can be no doubt that, for his years, his attainments were very extensive. Still it is true, that that perfectly unique characteristic of Leibnitz—his equal aptitude and appetite for reading and thinking, for the accumulation of knowledge and for original speculation—could never have been in the same degree a characteristic of Pascal; and still less in such amazingly diversified directions. Pascal followed in this respect the predominant law of all very inventive minds. He was fonder of thought than of books—of meditation than of acquisition. Even this tendency of mind manifested itself within a more restricted sphere; ample enough, it is true—that of philosophy and theology. To Leibnitz, jurisprudence, history, and antiquities were nearly as familiar as these.

But if the character of Pascal's genius was less excursive than that of Leibnitz, and the literary element in it far less active, these points of inferiority were amply compensated by a superiority in other qualities, in which there can be no comparison between them. In inventiveness, they may perhaps have been equal—but even here, only in mathematics; in moral science—the science of man—we know of nothing out of Bacon, who may be said to set all comparison at defiance,—certainly nothing in Leibnitz, that will bear comparison in depth, subtlety, and comprehensiveness, with some of the 'Thoughts' of Pascal. But, in another characteristic of true genius—and which, for want of another name, we must call *felicity*—neither Leibnitz, nor, we might almost affirm, any one else, can, in the full import of the term, be compared with Pascal. Endowed with originality the

most active and various, all that he did was with *grace*. Full of depth, subtlety, brilliancy, both his thoughts and the manner in which he expresses them are also full of beauty. His just image is that of the youthful athlete of Greece, in whom was seen the perfection of physical beauty and physical strength; in whom every muscle was developed within the just limits calculated to secure a symmetrical development of all;—the result of the whole being the largest possible amount of power and flexibility in union.

In all the manifestations of Pascal's mind, this rare felicity is exuberantly displayed;—in the happy methods by which he lighted on truth and pursued scientific discovery; in the selection and arrangement of topics in all his compositions; in the peculiar delicacy of his wit—so strongly contrasted with all the ordinary exhibitions of that quality of mind, with which his coarse age was familiar; and, above all, in that indescribable elegance of expression which uniformly characterises his finished efforts, and often his most negligent utterances, and which even time can do nothing to impair. Let us be permitted to say a word or two further on these topics.

In his scientific writings, we seem to discern the traces of this felicity almost equally in the *matter* and the *form*. In relation to the former, there is probably a little illusion practised upon us. In reading his uniformly elegant and perspicuous exposition of his own scientific discoveries, we are apt to underrate the toil and intellectual struggles by which he achieved them. We know that they were, and must have been, attended with much of both—nay, that his shattered health was the penalty of the intensity of his studies. Still, it is hardly possible to read his expositions without having the impression that his discoveries resembled a species of inspiration; and that his mind followed out the first germinant thought to its consequences, with more ease and rapidity than is usually exemplified. We can scarcely imagine it would have been necessary for him to have undergone the frightful toils of Kepler, had he been led into the same track of discoveries. And, in fact, whatever illusion his ease and elegance of manner may produce, we know that his achievements were rapidly completed. It was so with the problems on the Cycloid; it was so with his discoveries in Pneumatics and Hydrostatics. In fact, though his *Traité de l'Equilibre des Liqueurs*, and that *De la Pesanteur de l'Air* were not composed till 1653, they seem to have been only another form of the treatise he promised in his *Nouvelles Expériences touchant le Vide*, published in 1647; and of which that tract was avowedly an abridge-

ment. Indeed, as already said, Pascal had nearly quitted these investigations before the completion of his twenty-sixth year.

There was no scientific subject which Pascal touched in which the felicity of his genius—the promptitude and brilliancy of his mind—did not shine forth. We see these qualities eminently displayed in his *Traité du Triangle Arithmétique*—in the invention and construction of his Arithmetical Machine—in the mode of solving the problems respecting the Cycloid, in which, while employing Cavalieri's 'Method of Indivisibles,' he proposes to remove the principal objection which had been made to it, by conceptions which bring him within a step of the Fluxions of Newton, and the Calculus of Leibnitz. The same qualities of mind are eminently displayed in the manner in which he establishes the hydrostatic paradox; and generally in the experiments detailed in the *Nouvelles Experiences*, and the other connected pieces;—most of all in that celebrated *Crucial* experiment on the Puy-de-Dôme, by which he lastingly decided the cause of the suspension of the mercury in the barometrical tube. As there are few things recorded in the history of science more happily ingenious than the conception of this experiment, so never was there any thing more pleasantly *naïve* than the manner in which he proposes it, in his letter to M. Perier. 'You doubtless see,' says he, 'that this experiment is decisive of the question; and 'that if it happen that the mercury shall stand lower at the top than 'at the bottom of the mountain, (as I have many reasons for thinking, although all those who have meditated on this subject are 'of a contrary opinion,) it will necessarily follow, that the 'weight and pressure of the air are the sole cause of this suspension of the mercury, and not the *horror of a vacuum*; since it is 'very certain, that there is much more air to press at the base 'than on the summit of the mountain; while, on the other hand, 'we surely cannot say, that nature abhors a vacuum more at the 'bottom of a mountain than on the top of it!''*

* Descartes claimed the suggestion of this brilliant experiment. All we can say is, that Pascal, who was the very soul of honour, repeatedly declares, that he had meditated this experiment from the very time he had verified Torricelli's, and only waited the opportunity of performing it. On the other hand, Descartes was jealous of the discoveries of others, and, as Leibnitz truly observes, slow to give to them all the praise and admiration which were their due. With all his great powers, he had but little magnanimity. It is possible that he may have thought of a similar experiment, and that he may have conferred upon the subject with Pascal; but, if the latter speaks truth, it is impossible that he should

The usual felicity of his style is seen throughout his philosophical as well as his other works. They appear to us to possess the highest merit which can belong to scientific composition. It is true that, in his purely *mathematical* writings—partly from the defective notation of his age—itself a result of the want of that higher Calculus, which was reserved for Newton and Leibnitz—he is often compelled to adopt a more prolix style of demonstration than would have been subsequently necessary; but even here, and still more in all the fragments which relate to natural philosophy, his style is strikingly contrasted with the clumsy expression of the generality of contemporary writers. His Fragments abound in that perspicuous elegance which the French denominate by the expressive word *netteté*. The arrangement of thought and the turn of expression are alike beautiful. Probably no one ever knew so well when to stay his hand.

But it is, of course, in his writings on moral and critical subjects in which we should chiefly expect this felicity to appear; and here we may well say, in the eloquent language of M. Faugère, it is a 'style grand sans exagération, partout rempli d'émotion et contenu, vif sans turbulence, personnel sans pédanterie et sans amour-propre, superbe et modeste tout-ensemble;' or, as he elsewhere expresses it, 'tellement identifié avec l'âme de l'écrivain qu'il n'est que la pensée elle-même, parée de sa chaste nudité comme une statue antique.' By the confession of the first French critics, the *Lettres Provinciales* did more than any other composition to fix the French language. On this point, the suffrages of all the most competent judges—of Voltaire and Bossuet, D'Alembert and Condorcet—are unanimous. 'Not a single word occurs,' says the first, 'partaking of that vicissitude to which living languages are so subject. Here, then, we may fix the epoch when our language may be said to have assumed a settled form.'—'The French language,' says D'Alembert,

not already have determined upon it. Indeed, it is hardly probable that; had it been originally a conception of Descartes, he would not have made the experiment for himself, and thus gained the honour undisputed and undivided.—Pascal was, in like manner, accused of having appropriated the honour of Torricelli's experiments. Nothing can be more perfectly beautiful than the manner in which he vindicates his integrity and candour, in his letter to M. de Ribeyre on this subject. He shows triumphantly, that, in his original *Nouvelles Expériences*, he had not only not claimed, but had most distinctly disclaimed, all credit for the experiments in question, and had been at much pains to give honour where honour was due.

'was very far from being formed, as we may judge by the greater part of the works published at that time, and of which it is impossible to endure the reading. In the "Provincial Letters," there is not a single word that has become obsolete; and that book, though written above a century ago, seems as if it had been written but yesterday.' And as these Letters were the first model of French prose, so they still remain the objects of unqualified admiration. The writings of Pascal have, indeed, a paradoxical destiny:—'flourishing in immortal youth,' all that time can do is to superadd to the charms of perpetual beauty the veneration which belongs to age. His style cannot grow old.

When we reflect on the condition of the language when he appeared, this is truly wonderful. It was but partially reclaimed from barbarism—it was still an imperfect instrument of genius. He had no adequate models—he was to create them. Thus to seize a language in its rude state, and compel it, in spite of its hardness and intractability, to become a malleable material of thought, is the peculiar characteristic of the highest species of mind: nothing but the intense fire of genius can fuse these heterogeneous elements, and mould them into forms of beauty. As a proof, it may be remarked, that none but the highest genius has ever been equal to this task. Genius of less than the first order will often make improvements in the existing state of a language, and give it a perceptible impulse; but none but the most creative and plastic power can at once mould a language into forms which cannot become obsolete;—which remain in perpetuity a part of the current literature, amidst all the changes of time and the sudden caprices of fashion. Thus it required a Luther to mould the harsh German into the language of his still unrivalled translation of the Scriptures; in which, and in his vernacular compositions, he first fairly reclaimed his native language from its wild state, brought it under the yoke, and subjected it to the purposes of literature. Pascal was in a similar manner the creator of the French. Yet each performed his task in a mode as characteristic as the materials on which they operated were different. Energy was the predominant quality of Luther's genius; beauty of Pascal's. The rugged German, under the hand of Luther, is compelled to yield to an irresistible application of force; it is the lightning splitting oak and granite. The French, under that of Pascal, assumes forms of beauty by a still and noiseless movement, and as by a sort of enchantment;—it is 'the west wind ungirding the bosom of the earth, and calling forth bud and flower at its bidding.'

It may be thought strange by some that the orderly employ-

ment of an unformed language should be represented, not only as so signal a triumph, but as an index of the highest genius. But it will not appear unphilosophical to those who duly consider the subject. If, even when language has reached its full development, we never see the full capacities of this delicate instrument put forth except by great genius, how can we expect it when the language is still imperfect? As used in this rude state, language resembles the harsh music of the Alpine horn, blown by the rude Swiss herd-boy: it is only when the lofty peaks around take it up that it is transmuted by their echoes into exquisite melody.

The severely pure and simple taste which reigns in Pascal's style seems, when we reflect on those vices which more or less infected universal letters, little less than a miraculous felicity. One wonders by what privilege it was that he freed himself from the contagion of universal example, and rose so superior to his age. Taste was yet almost unfelt; each writer affected extravagance of some kind or other;—strained metaphor, quaint conceits, far-fetched turns of thought, unnatural constructions. These were the vices of the day; not so much perhaps in France as in England, but to a great extent in both. From all these blemishes Pascal's style is perfectly free; he anticipated all criticism, and became a law to himself. Some of his observations, however, show how deeply he had revolved the true principles of taste in composition. His 'thoughts' *sur l'Eloquence et Style*,* are well worth the perusal of every writer and speaker. In one of them he profoundly says, 'The very same sense is materially affected by the words that convey it. The sense receives its dignity from the words, rather than imparts it to them.' In another, he says, 'All the false beauties that we condemn in Cicero have their admirers in crowds.' And, in a third, he admirably depicts the prevailing vice of strained antitheses: 'Those,' says he, 'who frame antitheses by forcing the sense, are like men who make false windows for the sake of symmetry. Their rule is not to speak justly, but to make just figures.' The time spent on his own compositions, however, shows that even such felicity as his own could not dispense with that toil, which is an essential condition of all perfect writing—indeed of all human excellence; and is one other proof of the extreme shallowness of that theory which would have us believe that, to attain perfection, genius alone is all-sufficient. He is said, when engaged on his *Lettres Provinciales*, to have sometimes employed twenty days in perfecting a single letter.

Another circumstance which, as we have said, indicates Pas-

* *Faugère*, vol. i. p. 249.

cal's felicity of genius, is the peculiar delicacy and refinement of his wit. We say its delicacy and refinement, for the mere conjunction of great wit with great aptitude for science, we do not consider as a felicity peculiar to Pascal. It is the *character* of that wit. As to the conjunction of distinguished wit in one or other of its many forms, with elevated genius, it is far too common to be regarded as a peculiarity of his mind. Paradoxical as the statement may at first sight appear to many who have been accustomed to consider wisdom and wit as dwelling apart, we doubt whether there is any one attribute so common to the highest order of mind, whether scientific or imaginative, as some form or other of this quality. The names of Bacon, Shakspeare, Plato, Pascal, Johnson, Byron, Scott, and many more, will instantly occur to the reader. It is true that the history of the species reveals to us minds either really adapted so exclusively to the abstrusest branches of science, or so incessantly immersed in them, that, if they possess the faculty of wit at all, it is never developed. Aristotle and Newton—though some of the few sayings of the former which tradition has preserved are not a little racy—may be named as examples. But, in general, and the whole history of science and literature will show, that this attribute, in one or other of its thousand varieties, has formed an almost perpetual accompaniment of the finest order of minds. And we may add, that, *a priori*, we should expect it to be so. That same activity of suggestion and aptitude for detecting resemblances, analogies, and differences, which qualify genius for making discoveries in science, or, under different modifications, for evoking the creations of imagination, may well be supposed not to desert their possessor, when, for playful purposes, and in moments of relaxation, he exercises himself in the detection of the analogies on which wit and drollery are founded. Yet, clear as this truth seems to be, and strongly as it is corroborated by the history of genius, the opposite opinion has been, we believe, oftener expressed, and the highest order of mind pronounced incompatible with such a conjunction.

It is not, then, the activity, but the peculiar delicacy of Pascal's wit, which renders this feature of his genius so truly worthy of admiration;—the more admirable, when it is remembered that the wit of that age, and especially among polemics, so generally took the form of gross scurrility and buffoonery; and, even when it did not sink so low as that, was overgrown with every species of quaintness and affectation. Almost in no instance was it found pure from one or other of these debasements. The wit of Pascal, on the contrary, appears even now exquisitely chaste and natural—attired in a truly Attic simplicity of form and

expression. In one quality—that of irony—nothing appears to us to approach it, except what we find in the pages of Plato, between whom and Pascal (different, and even opposite, as they were in many respects) it were easy to trace a resemblance in other points besides the character of their wit. Both possessed surpassing acuteness and subtlety of genius in the department of abstract science—both delighted in exploring the depths of man's moral nature—both gazed enamoured on the ideal forms of moral sublimity and loveliness—both were characterized by eminent beauty of intellect, and both were absolute masters of the art of representing thought—each with exquisite refinement of taste, and all the graces of language. The Grecian, indeed, possessed a far more opulent imagination, and indulged in a more gorgeous style than the Frenchman; or rather, Plato may be said to have been a master of all kinds of style. His dramatic powers, however, in none of his Dialogues, can be greater than those which Pascal has displayed in his *Lettres Provinciales*. Nothing could be happier for his purpose—that of throwing into strong light the monstrous errors of the system he opposed—than the machinery he has selected. The affected ignorance and *naïveté* of M. Montalte, in quest of information respecting the theological disputes of the age, and especially the doctrines of the Jesuits—the frankness of the worthy Jesuit Father, of whom he seeks instruction, and who, in the boundless admiration of his Order, and the hope of making a convert, details without hesitation, or rather with triumph, the admirable contrivances by which their Casuists had, in fact, inverted every principle of morals, and eluded all the obligations of Christianity—the ironical compliments of the supposed Novice, intermingled with objections, and slightly expressed doubts, delivered with an air of modest ingenuousness, which covets only further light—the arch simplicity with which he involves the good father in the most perplexing dilemmas—the expressions of unsophisticated astonishment, which but prompt his stolid guide eagerly to make good every assertion by a proper array of authorities—a device which, as Pascal has used it, converts, what would have been in other hands only a dull catalogue of citations, into a source of perpetual amusement—the droll consequences which, with infinite affectation of simplicity, he draws from the worthy father's doctrines—the logical exigencies into which the latter is thrown in the attempt to solve them,—all these things managed as only Pascal could have managed them—render the book as amusing as any novel. The form of Letters enables him at the same time to intersperse, amidst the conversations they record, the most eloquent and glowing invectives

against the doctrines he exposes. Voltaire's well-known panegyric does not exceed the truth—'That Molière's best comedies do not excel them in wit, nor the compositions of Bossuet in sublimity.' 'This work,' says D'Alembert, 'is so much the more admirable, as Pascal, in composing it, seems to have *theologized* two things which seem not made for the theology of that time—language and pleasantry.'

The success of the work is well known. By his inimitable pleasantry, Pascal succeeded in making even the duller matters of scholastic theology and Jesuistical casuistry as interesting as a comedy; and, by his little volume, did more to render the formidable Society the contempt of Europe, than was ever done by all its other enemies put together.

The Jesuits had nothing for it but to inveigh against the letters as 'the immortal liars'—*les menteurs immortelles*. To their charge of having garbled citations, and tampered with evidence to produce an unfair impression against the Society, (practices utterly abhorrent from all Pascal's habits of mind and dispositions of heart,) he replies, with the characteristic boldness and frankness of his nature—'I was asked if I repented of having written *Les Provinciales*. I reply, that, far from having repented, if I had to write them now, I would write yet more strongly. I was asked why I have given the names of the authors from whom I have taken all the abominable propositions I have cited. I answer, that if I lived in a city where there were a dozen fountains, and that I certainly knew that there was one which was poisoned, I should be obliged to advertise all the world to draw no water from that fountain; and as they might think that it was a pure imagination on my part, I should be obliged to name him who had poisoned it, rather than expose all the city to the danger of being poisoned by it. I was asked why I had employed a pleasant, jocose, and diverting style. I reply, that if I had written in a dogmatical style, it would have been only the learned who would have read, and they would have had no necessity to do it, being at least as well acquainted with the subject as myself: thus, I thought it a duty to write so as to be comprehended by women and men of the world, that they might know the danger of those maxims and propositions which were then universally propagated, and of which they permitted themselves to be so easily persuaded. I was asked, lastly, if I had myself read all the books I have cited. I answer, No; for in that case it would have been necessary to have passed my life in reading very bad books; but I had read through the whole of Escobar twice, and, for the others, I caused them to be read by my friends. But I have

‘ never used a single passage without having myself read it in
‘ the book cited, or without having examined the subject on
‘ which it is adduced, or without having read both what pre-
‘ cedes and what follows it, in order that I might not run the
‘ risk of quoting what was, in fact, an objection for a reply to it,
‘ which would have been both censurable and unjust.’

The moral aspects of Pascal's character are as inviting as those of his intellect: here, too, he was truly great. Some infirmities, indeed, he had, for he was no more than man; he is nevertheless one of the very few who as passionately pursue the acquisition of moral excellence, as the quest after speculative truth; who, practically as well as theoretically, believe that the highest form of humanity is not intellect, but goodness. Usually it is far otherwise; there is no sort of proportion between the diligence and assiduity which men are ordinarily willing to expend on their own intellectual and moral culture. Even of those who are in a good degree under the influence of moral and religious principles, and whose conduct in all the more important instances of life shows it, how few are there who make that comprehensive rectitude, the obligation of which they acknowledge, and the ideal of which they admire, the *study* of their lives, the rule of their daily actions in little things as well as great; or who analyse their motives and school their hearts (in the habitual expressions of thought and feeling) in conscious obedience to it! Nor can it be regarded as other than an indication that there is something wrong about human nature, that of those three distinct orders of ‘ greatness,’ which Pascal has so exquisitely discriminated in his *Pensées*—power, intellect, and goodness—the admiration inspired by the two first should be so much greater than that inspired by the last. The reverence for genius, in particular, often degenerates into something like idolatry; so much so, as to lead to the proverbial, but most culpable extenuation of grave faults on the part of biographers, who cannot bear to see a spot on the bright luminary they admire. Even if moral excellence be theoretically allowed to claim equal enthusiasm, it, in fact, rarely receives it. How vivid, after all, is the sentiment which the intellect of a Bacon or a Shakspeare usually excites in the young and ardent, compared with that with which they regard a Howard or a Martyn. Yet invincible patience, heroic constancy, that honesty of purpose which is proof against all flatteries and all menace, perfect candour, the spirit of unfeigned humility, benevolence, and charity, are surely not less worthy of our most enthusiastic admiration, than those qualities of mind which discover a new law of nature, or pour forth beautiful strains of poetry.

It is one of the proofs, according to Paley's ingenious remark, of the originality of the Gospel, and one of the marks of the divinity of its origin, that it chiefly insists on the cultivation of an order of virtues which had been least applauded by man, and in which, notwithstanding, man was most deficient; of humility, meekness, patience, rather than of those opposite virtues to which the active principles of his nature would most readily prompt him, and which have been accordingly the chief objects of culture and admiration. We may extend the remark, and observe, that it is an equal indication of the originality of the Gospel and of the divinity of its origin, that the *ideal* of greatness which it has presented to us, is of a different character from that which has chiefly fixed the enthusiastic gaze of man. It is not one in which power and intellect constitute the predominant qualities, associated with just so much virtue as serves to make the picture free from all grave reproach; but the perfection of truth, rectitude, and love—to which even the attributes of superhuman power and superhuman wisdom, with which they are blended, are so wonderfully subordinated, that they seem, as they are, intrinsically of inferior lustre. Glorious as is their light, it is absolutely quenched in the brighter effulgence of ineffable and supernal goodness. We think of Cæsar as the great warrior and the great statesman; of Shakspeare as the great poet; of Newton as the great philosopher: when the Christian thinks of his Master, though he *believes* him to be possessed of immeasurably greater power and wisdom than theirs—his first, last thought is, that he is *THE GOOD*.

The character of *greatness* in Christ, Pascal has beautifully touched. 'The distance between Matter and Mind typifies the infinitely greater distance between Mind and Love. . . . All the *éclat* of external greatness has no lustre for men profoundly engaged in intellectual researches. . . . *Their* greatness, again, is invisible to the noble and the rich. . . . Great geniuses have their empire, their splendour, their victory, their renown. . . . These are seen with the eyes of the mind, and that is sufficient. . . . Holy men, again, have *their* empire, *their* victory, and *their* renown. . . . Archimedes would have been venerable even without rank. He gained no battles; but to the intellectual world he has bequeathed great discoveries. How illustrious does he look in *their* eyes! . . . In like manner Jesus Christ, without external splendour, without the outward repute of science, is great in his own order of holiness. . . . It had been idle in Archimedes to have insisted on his royal descent in his books of geometry. And it had been as useless for our Lord Jesus Christ to assume the state of a king for the purpose

‘ of giving splendour to his reign of holiness. But he came
 ‘ fully invested with the lustre of his own order.’

Few men have ever dwelt on this ideal of moral perfection, or sought to realize its image in themselves with more ardour than Pascal—not always, indeed, as regards the mode, with as much wisdom as ardour. Yet, upon all the great features of his moral character, one dwells with the serenest delight. Greatly as he is to be admired, he is yet more to be loved. His humility and simplicity, conspicuous as his genius and acquisitions, were those of a very child. The favourite of science—repeatedly crowned, as an old Greek might have said of some distinguished young hero at Olympia, with the fairest laurels of the successful mathematician and the unrivalled polemic—making discoveries even in his youth which would have intoxicated many men even to madness—neither pride nor vanity found admission to his heart. Philosophy and science* produced on him only their proper effect, and taught him—not how much he knew, but how little; not merely what he had attained, but of how much more he was ignorant. His perfect love of truth was beautifully blended with the gentlest charity; and his contempt of fraud and sophistry never made him forget, while indignantly exposing them, the courtesies of the gentleman and the moderation of the Christian: and thus the severest raillery that probably ever fell from human lips, flows on in a stream undiscouraged by one particle of malevolence, and unruffled by one expression of coarseness or bitterness. The transparency and integrity of his character not only shone conspicuous in all the transactions of his life, but seem even now to beam upon us as from an open ingenuous countenance, in the inimitable frankness and transparency of his style. It is impossible to read the passages in his philosophical writings, in which he notices or refutes the calumnies to which he had been exposed—by which it was sometimes sought to defraud him of the honour of the discoveries he had made, and in one instance to cover him with the infamy of appropriating discoveries which had been made by others—without being convinced of the perfect candour and integrity of his nature.* His generosity and benevolence were unbounded; so much so, indeed, as to become almost vices by excess; passing far beyond that mean in which the Stagyrice fixes the limits of all virtue. He even beggared himself by his prodigal benefactions;

* See more particularly his letters to Father Noel, M. Le Pailleur, and M. De Ribeyre.

he did what few do—mortgaged even his expectancies to charity. To all which we may add, that he bore the prolonged and excruciating sufferings of his latter years with a patience and fortitude which astonished all who witnessed them.

The failings of Pascal—for to these we must advert—were the result partly of that system of faith in which he had been educated, and which, though he did so much to expose many of the worst enormities which had attached themselves to it, still exercised considerable influence over him. It is lamentable to see such a mind as his surrendering itself to some of the worst extravagances of asceticism. Yet the fact cannot be denied; nor is it improbable that his life—brief perhaps at the longest, considering his intense study and his feeble constitution—was yet made briefer by these pernicious practices. We are told, not only that he lived on the plainest fare and performed the most menial offices for himself; not only that he practised the severest abstinence and the most rigid devotions, but that he wore beneath his clothes a girdle of iron, with sharp points affixed to it; and that, whenever he found his mind disposed to wander from religious subjects, or take delight in things around him, he struck the girdle with his elbow, and forced the sharp points of the iron into his side. We even see but too clearly that his views of life, to a considerable extent, became perverted. He cherished mistrust even of its blessings, and acted, though he meant it not, as if the very gifts of God were to be received with suspicion—as the smiling tempters to evil—the secret enemies of our well-being. He often expresses himself as though he thought, not only that suffering is necessary to the moral discipline of man, but as though nothing but suffering is at present safe for him. ‘I can approve,’ he says in one place, ‘only of those who seek in tears for happiness.’ ‘Disease,’ he declares in another place, ‘is the natural state of Christians.’ It is evident that the great and gracious Master, in whose school we all are, and whose various dispensations of goodness and severity are dictated by a wisdom greater than our own, does not think so: if he did, health would be the exception and disease the rule. It is but too true, indeed, that not only is suffering necessary to teach us our feebleness and dependence, and to abate the pride and confidence of our nature, but that we are but too apt to forget, with the return of prosperity, all the wise reflections and purposes which we had made in sorrow. Jeremy Taylor likens us, in one of his many fanciful images, to the fabled lamps in the tomb of Terentia, which ‘burned under ground for many ages together,’ but which, as soon as ever they were

brought into the air and saw a brighter light, went out in darkness. 'So long as we are in the retirements of sorrow, of want, of fear, of sickness, we are burning and shining lamps; but when God lifts us up from the gates of death, and carries us abroad into the open air, to converse with prosperity and temptations, we go out in darkness, and we cannot be preserved in light and heat but by still dwelling in the regions of sorrow.' There is beauty, and, to a certain extent, truth in the figure; but it by no means follows that continuous suffering would be good for man: on the contrary, it would be as remote from producing the perfection of our moral nature as unmitigated prosperity. It would be apt to produce a morbid and ghastly piety; the 'bright lamps' of which Taylor speaks, would still be irradiating—only a tomb. Since the end of suffering, as a moral discipline, is only to enable us at last to bear unclouded happiness, what guarantee can we now have of its beneficial effect on us, except by partial experiments of our capacity of recollecting and practising the lessons of adversity in intervals of prosperity? It is true that there is no more perilous ordeal through which man can pass—no greater curse which can be imposed on him, as he is at present constituted—than that of being condemned to walk his life long in the sunlight of unshaded prosperity. His eyes ache with that too untempered brilliance—he is apt to be smitten with a moral *coup de soleil*. But it as little follows that no sunshine is good for us. He who made us, and who tutors us, alone knows what is the exact measure of light and shade, sun and cloud, storm and calm, frost and heat, which will best tend to mature those flowers which are the object of this celestial husbandry; and which, when transplanted into the paradise of God, are to bloom there for ever in amaranthine loveliness. Nor can it be without presumption that we essay to interfere with these processes; our highest wisdom is to fall in with them. And certain it is that every man will find by experience that he has enough to do, to bear with patience and fortitude the *real* afflictions with which God may visit him, without venturing to fill up the intervals in which He has left him ease, and even invites him to gladness, by a self-imposed and artificial sorrow. Nay, if his mind be well constituted, he will feel that the learning how to apply, in hours of happiness, the lessons which he has learned in the school of sorrow, is not one of the least difficult lessons which sorrow has to teach him; not to mention that the grateful reception of God's gifts is as true a part of duty—and even a more neglected part of it—than a patient submission to his chastisements.

It is at our peril, then, that we seek to interfere with the discipline which is provided for us. He who acts as if God had mistaken the proportions in which prosperity and adversity should be allotted to us—and seeks by hair-shirts, prolonged abstinence, and self-imposed penance, to render more perfect the discipline of suffering—only enfeebles instead of invigorating his piety; and resembles one of those hypochondriacal patients—the plague and torment of physicians—who having sought advice, and being supposed to follow it, are found not only taking their physician's well-judged prescriptions, but secretly dosing themselves in the intervals with some quackish nostrum. Thus it was even with a Pascal—and we cannot see that the experiment was attended in his case with any better effects.

It is indeed pitiable to read, that during his last days his perverted notions induced him to refrain from the natural expressions of fondness and gratitude towards his sisters and attendants, lest that affection with which they regarded him, should become inordinate; lest they should transfer to an earthly creature the affection due only to the Supreme. Something like an attempted justification of such conduct, indeed, occurs in his *Penées*. 'Il est injuste qu'on s'attache à moi, quoiqu' on le fasse avec plaisir et volontairement. Je tromperais ceux à qui j'en ferais naître le désir; car je ne suis la fin de personne, et n'ai pas de quoi les satisfaire. Ne suis-je pas prêt à mourir? Et ainsi l'objet de leur attachment mourra donc. Comme je serais coupable de faire croire une fausseté, quoique je la persuadasse doucement et qu'on la crût avec plaisir, et qu'en cela on me fît plaisir; de même je suis coupable de me faire aimer.'—(Tom. i. p. 198.) Madame Perier has cited this passage in the life of her brother, as accounting for his apparent coldness to herself.*

It is wonderful that a mind so powerful as his, should be misled by a pernicious asceticism to adopt such maxims; it is still more wonderful that a heart so fond should have been able to act upon them. To restrain, even in his dying hours, expressions of tenderness towards those whom he so loved, and who so loved

* The passage of Madame Perier is deeply affecting. 'Meanwhile, as I was wholly a stranger to his sentiments on this point, I was quite surprised and discouraged at the rebuffs he would give me upon certain occasions. I told my sister of it, and not without complaining, that my brother was unkind, and did not love me; and that it looked to me as if I put him in pain, even at the very moment I was studying to please him, and striving to perform the most affectionate offices for him in his illness.'—*Madame Perier's Memoirs of Pascal*.

him—to simulate a coldness which his feelings belied—to repress the sensibilities of a grateful and confiding nature—to inflict a pang by affected indifference on hearts as fond as his own,—here was indeed a proof of the truth he so passionately meditated upon, the ‘greatness and the misery’ of man, of his strength and his weakness;—weakness in supposing that such perversion of all nature could ever be a dictate of duty—strength in performing, without wincing, a task so hard. The American Indian bearing unmoved the torture of his enemies, exhibits not, we may rest assured, greater fortitude than Pascal, when, with such a heart as his, he received in silence the last ministrations of his devoted friends, and even declined with cold and averted eye the assiduities of their zealous love.

That same melancholy temperament which, united with a pernicious asceticism, made him avert his gaze even from innocent pleasures, and suspect a serpent lurking in every form of pleasure—also gave to his *representations* of the depravity of our nature an undue intensity and Rembrandt-like depth of colouring. His mode of expression is often such, that were it not for what we otherwise know of his character, it might almost be mistaken for an indication of misanthropy. With this vice, accordingly, Voltaire does not hesitate to tax him.

‘Ce fameux écrivain, misanthrope sublime.’

Nothing can be more unjust. As to the *substance* of what Pascal has said of human frailty and infirmity, most of it is at once verified by the appeal to individual consciousness; and as to the *manner*, we are not to forget that he every where dwells as much upon the ‘greatness,’ as upon the ‘misery’ of man. ‘It is ‘the ruined archangel,’ says Hallam, with equal justness and beauty, ‘that Pascal delights to paint.’ It is equally evident that he is habitually inspired by a desire to lead man to truth and happiness; nor is there any thing more affecting than the passage with which he closes one of his expostulations with infidelity, and which M. Cousin finally characterises as ‘une citation glorieuse à Pascal.’ ‘This argument, you say, delights me. If ‘this argument pleases you, and appears strong, know that it ‘proceeds from one, both before and after it, fell on his ‘knees before that Infinite and Invisible Being to whom he ‘has subjected his whole soul, to pray that he would also subject ‘you to himself for your good and for his glory; and that thus ‘omnipotence might give efficacy to his feebleness.’

In addition to this, it must be said, that in his most bitter reflections, this truly humble man is thinking as much of himself as of others, and regards Blaise Pascal as but a type of the race

whose degeneracy he mourns. His most bitter sarcasms often terminate with a special application to the writer. Thus he says, 'Vanity is so rooted in the heart of man, that a common soldier, a scullion, will boast of himself, and will have his admirers. It is the same with the philosophers: Those who write would fain have the fame of having written well; and those who read it, would have the glory of having read it; and I, who am writing, probably feel the same desire, and not less those who shall read it.'

It is true, indeed, that some of his reflections are as caustic and bitter as those of Rochefoucauld himself. For example—'Curiosity is but vanity. Often we wish to know more, only that we may talk of it. People would never traverse the sea if they were never to speak of it,—for the mere pleasure of seeing, without the hope of ever communicating what they have seen.'

And again, 'Man is so constituted, that, by merely telling him he is a fool, he will at length believe it; and, if he tells himself so, he will constrain himself to believe it. For man holds an internal intercourse with himself, which ought to be well regulated, since even here "Evil communications corrupt good manners."'

It may not be without amusement, perhaps instruction, to cite one or two other specimens of this shrewd and caustic humour.

'Certain authors, speaking of their works, say, "My book, my commentary, my history." It were better to say, "Our book, our history, our commentary;" for generally there is more in it belonging to others than to themselves.'

'I lay it down as a fact, that if all men knew what they say of one another, there would not be four friends in the world. This appears by the quarrels which are sometimes caused by indiscreet reports.'

Still, as it is the motive which gives complexion to all our moral actions, so Pascal's bitter wisdom, or even his unjust satire, is something very different from misanthropy. Byron found an apology for his Cain in Milton's delineation of Satan; but few beside himself could ever see its force. With as little reason could a Timon plead the example of a Pascal. He who cannot see a deep benevolence in all this great man wrote respecting our corrupted nature, must indeed be blind. It is with no demoniacal chuckle, no smile of malicious triumph, that he publishes the results of his researches into the depths of man's moral nature. On the contrary, it is with profoundest pity. He gazes on the noble ruins of humanity as on those of some

magnificent temple, and longs to see the fallen columns and the defaced sculpture restored. With what noble eloquence—with what deep sympathy with humanity—does he rebuke the levity of those infidels who tell us, as if it were matter of triumph, that we are ‘the inhabitants of a fatherless and ‘forsaken world;’ and who talk as if their vaunted demonstration of the vanity of our immortal hopes gave them a peculiar title to our gratitude and admiration!—‘What advantage is it to us ‘to hear a man saying that he has thrown off the yoke; that he ‘does not think there is any God who watches over his actions; ‘that he considers himself as the sole judge of his conduct, and ‘that he is accountable to none but himself? Does he imagine that we shall hereafter exercise special confidence in him, ‘and expect from him consolation, advice, succour in the exigencies of life? Do such men imagine that it is any matter of ‘delight to us to hear that they hold that our soul is but a little ‘vapour or smoke, and that he can tell us this in an assured and ‘self-sufficient tone of voice? Is this, then, a thing to say with ‘gaiety? Is it not rather a thing to be said with tears, as the ‘saddest thing in the world?’

On the whole, in contemplating the richly diversified characteristics of this exalted genius in its different moods and phases—the combination of sublimity and depth with lightness and grace—of the noblest aptitudes for abstract speculation with the most exquisite delicacy of taste and the utmost sensibility of feeling—of profound melancholy with the happiest and the most refined humour and raillery—the grandeur of many aspects of his character, and the loveliness of others, we seem to be reminded of the contradictory features of Alpine scenery, where all forms of sublimity and beauty, of loveliness and terror, are found in singular proximity; where upland valleys of exquisite verdure and softness lie at the foot of the eternal glaciers; where spots of purest pastoral repose and beauty, smile under the very shadow of huge snowy peaks, and form the entrance of those savage gorges, in which reign perpetual sterility and desolation; in which the very silence is appalling—broken only by the roar of the distant cataract, and the lonely thunder of the avalanche.

We must now make some remarks on the projected treatise, of which the *Pensées* were designed to form the rude materials.

It is impossible to determine, from the undeveloped character of the *Pensées*, the precise form of this work, and which was to have treated of the primary truths of all religion, and of the evidences of Christianity. It is clear, that about half the thoughts which

relate to theology at all, have reference to the former. In his time, however, both subjects might have been naturally included in one work. The great deistical controversies of Europe had not yet commenced, and there had been little reason to discriminate very nicely the limits of the two investigations. Pascal, himself, could hardly have anticipated the diversified forms which the subject of the evidences of Christianity alone would assume—so diversified, indeed, that probably they are insusceptible from their variety (external and internal) of being fully exhibited by one mind, or, consequently, in one volume. The evidences of Christianity almost form a science of themselves.

Fragmentary as the *Pensees* are, it is easy to see, both from their general tenor, and from the character of the author's mind, where the principal strength of such a work would lie. His proofs of the truths of natural religion would have been drawn from within, rather than from without; and his proofs of the truths of Christianity from its internal rather than external evidences;—including in this term 'internal,' not only the adaptation of the doctrines revealed to the moral nature of man, but whatsoever indications the fabric of Scripture itself may afford of the divinity of its origin.

It is evident, that all these topics he had revolved profoundly. None had explored more diligently the depths of man's moral nature, or mused more profoundly on the 'greatness and misery of man,'—or on the 'contrarieties' which characterise his nature—or on the remedies for his infirmities and corruptions. And there are few, even since his time, who seem to have appreciated more fully the evidences of Christianity, arising from indications of truth in the genius, structure, and style of the Scriptures; or from the difficulties, not to say impossibilities, of supposing *such* a fiction, as Christianity the probable product of any human artifice, much less of such an age, country, and, above all, such men as the problem limits us to. In one passage, he gives expression to a thought which has been expanded into the beautiful and eminently original work of Paley, entitled *Horæ Paulinæ*. He says, 'The style of the gospel is admirable in many respects, and, amongst others, in this—that there is not a single invective against the murderers and enemies of Jesus Christ. . . . If the modesty of the evangelical historians had been affected, and, in common with so many other traits of so beautiful a character, had been affected only that they might be observed, then, if they had not ventured to advert to it themselves, they would not have failed to get their friends to remark on it, to their advantage. But as they acted in this way without

'affectation, and from a principle altogether disinterested, they never provided any one to make such a criticism. And, in my judgment, there are many points of this character which have never been noticed hitherto; and this testifies to the simplicity with which the thing was done.'—(Tom. ii. p. 370.)

He has also, with characteristic comprehensiveness, condensed into a single paragraph the substance of the celebrated volume of 'Bampton Lectures,' on the contrasts between Mahometanism and Christianity. 'Mahomet founded his system on slaughter; Jesus Christ by exposing his disciples to death; Mahomet by forbidding to read; the Apostles by commanding it. In a word, so opposite is the plan of one from that of the other, that if Mahomet took the way to succeed according to human calculation, Jesus Christ certainly took the way to fail; and instead of arguing, that since Mahomet succeeded Jesus Christ might also succeed, we ought rather to say, that since Mahomet succeeded it is impossible but that Jesus Christ should fail.'—(Tom. ii. p. 337.)

On the subject of the External Evidences, we doubt whether he would have been equally successful,—partly because the spirit of accurate historic investigation had not yet been developed, and partly from the character of his own mind. On the subject of Miracles, too, he scarcely seems to have worked his conceptions clear; and, in relation to that of Prophecy, he was evidently often inclined to lay undue stress on analogies between events recorded in the Old Testament, and others recorded in the New, where Scripture itself is silent as to any connexion between them;—analogies in one or two cases as fanciful as any of those in which the Fathers saw so many types and prefigurations of undeveloped truths. This disposition to forget the limits between the analogies which may form the foundation of a logical argument, and those which, after all, can yield only poetical illustrations, has too often obtruded itself even into the domain of physical science; and is one from which the most philosophic minds, if they have much imaginativeness, are by no means exempt. Even Bacon, in several instances, has been the dupe of this delusion—one of the *idola tribus* which he was so anxious to expose.

There is one subject on which, after reading the *Pensées*, one would fain have seen a treatise from the hand of Pascal. If he had enjoyed leisure, health, and an unclouded mind, there is probably no man who could have written more profoundly or more wisely on the *Prima Philosophia*—the first principles of all knowledge—the limits within which man can hopefully speculate—and the condition and principles of belief. On all these sub-

jects he had reflected much and deeply. His remarks on the position of man between 'the two infinitudes,' which he has so finally illustrated—on the Dogmatists and Pyrrhonists—on the influence of the affections and passions on the understanding—and his observations entitled, *De l'Art de Persuader* and *De l'Esprit Geometrique*;—these all show how deeply he had revolved principal topics of such a work.

We have before alluded to the charge preferred against Pascal by M. Cousin, of no less than universal and hopeless scepticism;—from which, as is said, he took refuge in faith by a blind effort of will, without evidence, and in utter despair of obtaining it. One or two brief citations will show the extent to which this charge is pushed. 'Ce dessein [*des Pensées*,] je l'ai démontré dans ce Rapport, était d'accabler la philosophie Cartésienne, et avec elle toute philosophie, sous le scepticisme, pour ne laisser à la foi naturelle de l'homme d'autre asile que la religion. Or en cela, l'adversaire des Jesuites en devient, sans s'en douter, le serviteur et le soldat.*'—'Lui aussi, il a pour principe que le Pyrrhonisme est le vrai.'—'Il est sceptique, et, comme Huet, il se propose de conduire l'homme à la foi par la route du scepticisme.'† M. Cousin even goes the length of saying that Pascal's religion 'was not the solid and pleasant fruit which springs from the union of reason and feeling—*de la raison et du cœur*—in a soul well constituted and wisely cultivated; it is a bitter fruit, reared in a region desolated by doubt, under the arid breath of despair.'‡ He also tells us, that 'the very depth of Pascal's soul was a universal scepticism, from which he could find no refuge except in a voluntarily blind credulity.' 'Le fond même de l'âme de Pascal est un scepticisme universel, contre lequel il ne trouve d'asile que dans une foi volontairement aveugle.'

These are certainly charges which, without the gravest and most decisive proof, ought not to be preferred against any man; much less against one possessing so clear and powerful an intellect as Pascal. It is in fact the most degrading picture which can be presented of any mind; for what weakness can be more pitiable, or what inconsistency more gross, than that of a man who, by a mere act of will—if indeed such a condition of mind be conceivable—surrenders himself to the belief of the most stupendous doctrines, while he at the same time acknowledges that he has no proof whatever of their certainty?

We have great respect for M. Cousin as a philosopher and

* Rapport, p. xiii.

† Ibid. p. xix.

‡ Ibid. p. 162.

historian of philosophy, and we willingly render him the homage of our thanks for his liberal and enlightened survey of the intellectual philosophy of Scotland; but he must excuse us for dissenting from, and freely examining, his startling view of the scepticism of Pascal. That charge we do not hesitate to pronounce unjust, for the following reasons:—

1. It appears to us that M. Cousin has forgotten that Pascal by no means denies that there is sufficient evidence of the many great principles to which scepticism objects; he only maintains that we do not arrive at them by *demonstration*. He has powerfully vindicated the certainty of those intuitive principles which are not ascertained by reasoning, but are presupposed in every exercise of reasoning. Let us hear him: 'The only strong point,' says he, 'of the Dogmatists is, that we cannot consistently with honesty and sincerity doubt our own intuitive principles. . . . We know the truth, not only by reasoning, but by feeling and by a vivid and luminous power of direct comprehension; and it is by this last faculty that we discern first principles. It is vain for reasoning, which has no share in discovering these principles, to attempt subverting them. . . . The Pyrrhonists who attempt this must try in vain. . . . The knowledge of first principles, as the ideas of space, time, motion, number, matter, is as unequivocally certain as any that reasoning imparts. And, after all, it is on the perceptions of feeling and common sense, that reason must at last sustain itself, and base its argument. . . . Principles are perceived, propositions are deduced: each part of the process is certain, though in different modes. And it is as ridiculous that reason should require of feeling and perception proofs of these first principles before she assents to them, as it would be that perception should require from reason an intuitive impression of all the propositions at which *she* arrives. This weakness, therefore, ought only to humble that reason which would constitute herself the judge of all things, but not to invalidate the convictions of common sense, as if reason* only could be our guide and teacher.' Can he who thus speaks be a 'universal sceptic,' when it is the peculiar characteristic of Pyrrhonism—that is, universal scepticism—

* It is true that, in these and many similar passages, Pascal, as M. Cousin rightly observes, often employs the word *reason* as if it were synonymous with *reasoning*. But this only respects the *propriety* of his expressions; his *meaning* is surely tolerably clear.

to controvert the certainty of principles perceived by intuition, and to plume itself upon having successfully done this, when it has shown that they cannot be demonstrated by reasoning?

But let us hear him still more expressly on the subject of Pyrrhonism. 'Here, then, is open war proclaimed amongst men. Each must take a side; must necessarily range himself with the Pyrrhonists or the Dogmatists; for he who would think to remain neuter is a Pyrrhonist *par excellence*. He who is not against them is for them. What, then, must a person do in this alternative? Shall he doubt of every thing? Shall he doubt that he is awake, or that he is pinched or burned? Shall he doubt that he doubts? Shall he doubt that he is? We cannot get so far as this; and I hold it to be a fact, that there never has been an absolute and perfect Pyrrhonist.' M. Cousin must suppose Pascal to have made an exception in favour of himself, if it be indeed true that he was an 'universal sceptic.'

2. It does not appear to us that M. Cousin has sufficiently reflected, that in those cases in which conclusions truly involve processes of reasoning, Pascal would not deny that the preponderance of proof rested with the truths he believed, though he denied the *demonstrative* nature of that proof. And he applies this with perfect fairness to the evidences of Christianity, as well as to the truths of natural theology. It may well be, that minds so differently constituted as those of Pascal and Cousin may form different conclusions as to the *degree* of success which may attend the efforts of human reasoning; but a man is not to be straightway branded with the name of a universal sceptic, because he believes that there are very few subjects on which evidence can be said to be demonstrative. The more deeply a man reflects, the fewer will he think the subjects on which this species of certainty can be obtained; and the study neither of ancient nor of modern philosophy, will convince him that he is far wrong in this conclusion. But he will not, for all that, deny that there is sufficient evidence on all the more important subjects to form the belief and determine the conduct of man—evidence of precisely the same nature with that which *does* form the one, and *does* determine the other, in all the ordinary affairs of life. And this alone, where he rejects such evidence, is sufficient to condemn him; for what right has he to decline, in the more important instances, a species and degree of evidence which he never hesitates to *act* upon in all other cases?

Now, that Pascal believed that there was sufficient evidence of this character, for all the fundamental truths of religion, is manifest from many express declarations. 'There is light

‘enough,’ says he, ‘for those whose sincere wish is to see; and darkness enough to confound those of an opposite disposition.’* Of Christianity, he says,—‘It is impossible to see all the proofs of this religion combined in one view, without feeling that they have a force which no reasonable man can withstand.’† ‘The proofs of our religion are not of that kind that we can say they are *geometrically convincing*. . . . But their light is such that it outshines, or at the least equals, the strongest presumption to the contrary: so much so, that *sound reason* never can determine not to accept the evidence, and probably it is only the corruption and depravity of the heart that do.’ It is not without reason that M. Faugère says, in reference to the charge of scepticism urged against Pascal, ‘Faith and reason may equally claim him. If they sometimes appear to clash in his mind, it is because he wanted time not only to finish the work on which he was engaged, but even to complete that internal revision—*son œuvre intérieure*—which is a kind of second creation of genius; and to melt into one harmonious whole the diverse elements of his thoughts. . . . Amongst the inedited fragments of Pascal, we find these remarkable lines, “Il faut avoir ces trois qualités; Pyrrhonien, géomètre, Chrétien soumis; *et elles s'accordent et se tempèrent en doutant où il faut, en assurant où il faut, en se soumettant où il faut.*” These bold words comprise the entire history of Pascal, and express in brief the state of his mind.’‡

3. While we admit that the severely geometrical cast of Pascal's mind, as well as his gloomy temperament, have led him at times into extravagant expressions on this subject, so accomplished a critic as M. Cousin needs not be told, that it is not fair to take such expressions alone, and in their utmost strictness, if they can be confronted with others which modify or explain them. The former, in common candour, are to be interpreted only in connexion with the latter. This is the course we always pursue in interpreting the language of writers who have indulged in unlimited propositions; and if it be found even impossible to harmonize certain expressions—if they be absolutely contradictory—all we feel at liberty to do is to affirm the inconsistency of the writer; not to assume that he meant *all* that could possibly be implied in the one class of expressions, and *nothing* by the other. We know it is so natural for an author

* Tom. ii. p. 151.

† Tom. ii. p. 365.

‡ Tom. i. p. lxxvii. Introduction.

of much imagination or sensibility to give an inordinately strong expression to a present thought or feeling, and to forget the judge in the advocate, that he must be taken in another mood, or rather in several, if we wish to ascertain the *true mean* of his sentiments. Pascal has in one of his *Pensées* indicated this only reasonable method of procedure.

Now, M. Cousin is surely aware of the fact, that the expressions to which he has given such an unfavourable interpretation, may be easily confronted with others of a different tendency. He himself, indeed, proclaims it. He even says, no man ever contradicted himself more than Pascal. '*Jamais homme ne s'est plus contredit.*' 'Confounding,' says he, 'reasoning and reason, forgetting that he has himself judiciously discriminated primary and indemonstrable truths, discovered to us by that spontaneous intuition of reason—which we also with him call instinct, sentiment, feeling—from truths which are deduced from them by the method of reasoning, or which we draw from experience by induction;—forgetting that he has thus himself replied beforehand to all the attacks of scepticism, Pascal demands all these principles from experience and reasoning, and by that means, without much trouble, confounds them all.* Now, we do not stay to inquire here into the justness of the latter part of this representation; but we simply ask, why should all 'the replies' which, as our author admits, 'Pascal has *himself* made to scepticism,' go for nothing, and only the sentences in which he appears to favour it be remembered; and not only remembered, but taken as the sole exponents of his opinions? Surely a sceptic might as well take the opposite side, and say, 'Alas! after Pascal seems in many expressions to have conceded much to scepticism, he forgets all he had said; and shows, by his whole talk of "intuitive truths," and "sentiment," and "feeling," that he is no better than a dogmatist.' Might we not say to the two objectors, 'Worthy friends! you are the two knights in the fable;—one is looking on the golden, and the other on the silver side of the same shield.'

4. Nor is it to be forgotten, that while such a mode of interpretation as that of M. Cousin would hardly be just in the case of any work of any author, it is especially unfair to apply it to such a work, or rather mere materials of a work, as the *Pensées*. They were, we are to recollect, mere notes for Pascal's own use, and were never intended to be published as they are. Many of them are altogether imperfect and undeveloped; some

* Rapport, p. 157.

scarcely intelligible. It is impossible to tell with what modifications, and in what connexion, they would have stood in the matured form which the master-mind, hastily recording them for private reference, would have ultimately given them. Nay, there can scarcely be a doubt, that many of them were mere objections which Pascal noted for refutation—not opinions to be maintained by him; and this in many places may be not obscurely inferred: some, again, are mere quotations from Montaigne and other authors, extracted for some unknown purpose, but not distinguished in these private memoranda from the writer's own expressions; so that the first editors of the *Pensées* actually printed them in some cases as his. And lastly, some were dictated, in moments of sickness and pain, to an old domestic, who has scrawled them in a fashion which sufficiently shows that it is very possible that some errors may lie with the amanuensis.* Yet M. Cousin, while straining every expression on which he founds his charge of scepticism, to its utmost strictness of literal meaning, never seems to have adverted to one of these very reasonable considerations.

5. The weight which any deliberate opinion of M. Cousin must reasonably possess, may in this case well be confronted with that of Bayle; whose notorious scepticism would have been but too glad to find an ally in so admired a genius as Pascal, had there been any plausible pretext on which to claim him. Yet that subtle and acute critic declares, that Pascal knew perfectly well what to render to faith, and what to reason.

6. In our judgment, Pascal's projected work is itself a sufficient confutation of M. Cousin's supposition. For, did ever man before meditate an elaborate work on the 'evidences' of truths for which he believed no evidence but a blind faith could be given?

7. We maintain, lastly, that even if it were proved (which is, doubtless, very true) that Pascal, at different periods and in different moods of mind, formed varying estimates of the evidence on behalf of the great truths in which he was so sincere a believer; or even (which may possibly be true) that for transient intervals he doubted the conclusiveness of that evidence altogether, these variations would be far from justifying a charge of

* Of one of these expressions, on which M. Cousin has founded much, M. Faugère says, 'Tout ce morceau, dicté à une personne visiblement fort peu lettrée, présente çà et là des obscurités qui viennent sans doute de l'inexpérience du secrétaire.'—Tom. ii. p. 114.

'universal and habitual scepticism;'—such momentary differences of thought and mood having been notoriously experienced by many of the greatest minds. With some remarks on this subject, which may possibly be serviceable to minds peculiarly liable to attacks of scepticism, and calculated to teach all of us charity in judging of others, we shall close the present article.

We confess, then, that it by no means appears to us that a momentary invasion of doubt, or even of scepticism, is inconsistent with a *prevailing* and *habitual* faith, founded on an intelligent conviction of a preponderance of reasons to justify it; though those reasons may be ~~seen~~ to fall far short of absolute demonstration. There may be a profound impression that the reasons which justify habitual belief in any truth established only on moral evidence, or on a calculation of probabilities, are so varied and powerful—so vast in their sum—as to leave, in ordinary moods of mind, no doubt as to the conclusions to which they point, and the practical course of conduct which alone they can justify. And yet it is quite true, that from the infirmities of our nature—from the momentary strength which the most casual circumstances may give to opposing objections—from the depressing influence of sorrow—of a trivial indisposition—of a transient fit of melancholy—of impaired digestion—even of a variation of the weather—(for on all these humiliating conditions does the boasted soundness of human reason depend)—a man shall for an hour or a day really doubt of that of which he never doubted before, and of which he would be ashamed to doubt to-morrow. And especially is this the case in those who, like Pascal, possess exquisite sensibility, or are liable to fits of profound depression. As they look upon truth through the medium of cheerful or gloomy feelings, truth herself varies like a landscape, as seen in a bright sunshine or on a cloudy day. Pascal himself, in those reveries in which he loved to indulge on the mingled 'greatness and misery of man,' has frequently depicted the dependence of the most powerful mind, even in the bare exercise of its exalted faculties, on the most insignificant circumstances. We have cited, in the early part of this article, one striking passage to this effect. In another place he says, 'Place the greatest philosopher in the world on a plank, wider than is absolutely necessary for safety, and yet, if there is a precipice below him, though reason may convince him of his security, his imagination will prevail. There are many who could not even bear the thought of it without paleness and agitation.'*

* Tom. ii. p. 49.

Another very powerful representation, to the same effect, may be found on the same page, where, after describing a 'venerable judge,' who may seem 'under the control of a pure and dignified wisdom,' and enumerating several petty trials 'of his exemplary gravity,' Pascal declares, that, let any one of these befall him, 'and he will engage for the loss of the judge's self-possession.'

Nor are the causes which disturb the exercise of the reason merely physical: moral causes are yet more powerful; as we wish, hope, fear, humiliating as the fact is, so do we proceed to judge of evidence. Reason, that vaunted guide of life, nowhere exists as a pure and colourless light, but is perpetually tintured by the medium through which it passes; it flows in upon us through painted windows. And thus it is, that perhaps scarcely once in ten thousand times, probably never, does man deliver a judgment on evidence simply and absolutely judicial. 'The heart,' says Pascal, with great truth, 'has its reasons, which reason cannot apprehend.' 'The will,' says he, in another place, 'is one of the principal instruments of belief; not that it creates belief, but because things are true or false according to the aspect in which we regard them. The will, which is more inclined to one thing than another, turns away the mind from the consideration of those things which it loves not to contemplate; and thus the mind, moving with the will, stops to observe that which it approves, and forms its judgment by what it sees.'

Most emphatically is this the case, where the moral state is habitually opposed to the conclusions to which the preponderance of evidence points. This is so notorious, in relation to the fundamental truths of morals and religion, that there are probably few who really disbelieve them, or profess to do so, who (if they examine themselves at all) are not conscious that the 'wish' is father to the thought.' And what is true of habitual states of moral feeling, is also, in proportion, true of more transient states.

Certain, however, it is, that from one or other of the above causes, or from a combination of several, neither has the understanding the absolute dominion in the formation of our judgments, nor does she occupy an 'unshaken throne.' A seditious rabble of doubts, from time to time, rise to dispute her empire. Even where the mind, in its habitual states, is unconscious of any remaining doubt,—where it reposes in a vast preponderance of evidence in favour of this or that conclusion,—there may yet be, from one or other of the disturbing causes adverted to, a momentary eclipse of that light in which the soul seemed to dwell;

a momentary vibration of that judgment which we so often flattered ourselves was poised for ever. Yet this no more argues the want of habitual faith, than the variations of the compass argue the severance of the connexion between the magnet and the pole; or, than the oscillations of the 'rocking stone' argue that the solid mass can be heaved from its bed. A child may shake it, but a giant cannot overturn it.

And, as a matter of fact, there are, we apprehend, very few who have not been conscious of sudden and almost unaccountable disturbances of the intellectual atmosphere, unaccountable even after the equilibrium has been restored, and the air has again become serene and tranquil. In these momentary fluctuations, whether arising from moral or physical causes, or from causes of both kinds—from nervous depression, or a fit of melancholy, or an attack of pain, or harassing anxieties, or the loss of friends, or their misfortunes and calamities, or signal triumphs of baseness, or signal discomfitures of virtue, or, above all, from conscious neglect of duty—a man shall sometimes feel as if he had lost sight even of those primal truths on which he has been accustomed to gaze as on the stars of the firmament,—bright, serene, and unchangeable; even such truths as the existence of God, his paternal government of the world, and the divine origin of Christianity. In these moods, objections which he thought had long since been dead and buried, start again into sudden existence. They do more; like the escaped genius of the *Arabian Nights*, who rises from the little bottle in which he had been imprisoned, in the shape of a thin smoke, which finally assumes gigantic outlines, and towers to the skies, these flimsy objections dilate into monstrous dimensions, and fill the whole sphere of mental vision. The arguments by which we have been accustomed to combat them seem to have vanished, or, if they appear at all, look diminished in force and vividness. If we may pursue the allusion we have just made, we even wonder how such mighty forms should ever have been compressed into so narrow a space. Bunyan tells us, that when his pilgrims, under the perturbation produced by previous terrible visions, turned the perspective glass towards the Celestial City from the summits of the Delectable Mountains, 'their hands shook so that they could not steadily look through 'the' instrument; 'yet they thought they saw something like 'the gate, and also some of the glory of the place.' It is even so with many of the moods in which other 'pilgrims' attempt to gaze in the same direction; a deep haze seems to have settled over the golden pinnacles and the 'gates of pearl;' they, for a moment, doubt whether what others declare they have seen, and what they flatter themselves they have seen themselves, be any

thing else than a gorgeous vision in the clouds; and 'faith' is no longer 'the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of 'things not seen.'

And as there are probably few who have profoundly investigated the evidences of truth, who have not felt themselves for a moment at least, and sometimes for a yet longer space, as if on the verge of universal scepticism, and about to be driven forth without star or compass, on a boundless ocean of doubt and perplexity, so these states of feeling are peculiarly apt to infest the highest order of minds. For if, on the one hand, these can best discern and estimate the evidence which proves any truth, they, on the other, can see most clearly and feel most strongly the nature and extent of the objections which oppose it; while they are, at the same time, just as liable as the vulgar to the disturbing influences already adverted to. This liability is of course doubled, when its subject, as in the case of Pascal, labours under the disadvantage of a gloomy temperament.

A circumstance which in these conflicts of mind often gives *sceptical* objections an undue advantage, is, that the great truths which it is more especially apt to assail, are generally the result of an accumulation of proof by induction, or are even dependent on quite separate trains of argument. The mind, therefore, cannot comprehend them at a glance, and feel at once their integrated force, but must examine them in detail by successive acts of mind,—just as we take the measurement of magnitudes too vast to be seen at once in successive small portions. The existence of God, the moral government of the world, the divine origin of Christianity, are all truths of this stamp. Pascal, in one of his *Pensées* refers to this infirmity of the logical faculties. He justly observes—'To have a series of proofs incessantly before the mind, is beyond our power.' *D'en avoir toujours les preuves présentes, c'est trop d'affaire.*

From the inability of the mind to retain in perpetuity, or to comprehend at a glance a long chain of evidence, or the total effect of various lines of argument, Pascal truly observes, that it is not sufficient for the security of our convictions, and their due influence over our belief and practice, that we have proved them once for all by a process of reasoning—they must be, if possible, tinged and coloured by the imagination, informed and animated by feeling, and rendered vigorous and practical by habit. His words are well worth citing:—'Reason acts slowly, and with so many views upon so many principles which it is necessary should be always present, that it is perpetually dropping asleep, and is lost for want of having all its principles present to it. The affections do not act thus; they act instantaneously,

‘and are always ready for action. It is necessary, therefore, to imbue our faith with feeling, otherwise it will be always vacillating.’*

It will not, of course, be imagined that, in the observations we have now made, we are disposed to be the *apologists* of scepticism; or even, so far as it is yielded to, of that transient doubt to which we affirm even the most powerful minds are not only liable, but liable in defiance of what are ordinarily their strong convictions. So far as such states of mind are involuntary, and for an instant they often are, (till, in fact, the mind collects itself, and repels them,) they are of course the object not of blame but of pity. So far as they are dependent upon fluctuations of feeling, or upon physical causes which we can at all modify or control, it is our duty to summon the mind to resist the assault, and reflect on the nature of that evidence which has so often appeared to us little less than demonstrative.

We are not, then, the apologists of scepticism, or any thing approaching it; we are merely stating a psychological fact, for the proof of which we appeal to the recorded confessions of many great minds, and to the experience of those who have reflected deeply enough on any large and difficult subject, to know what can be said for or against it.

The asserted fact is, that *habitual* belief of the sincerest and strongest character is sometimes checkered with transient fits of doubt and misgiving; and that even where there is no actual *disbelief*—no, not for a moment—the mind may, in some of its moods, form a very diminished estimate of the evidence on which belief is founded, and grievously understate it accordingly. We believe that both these states of mind were occasionally experienced by Pascal—the latter, however, much more frequently than the former; and hence, as we apprehend, are we to account for those passages in which he speaks of the evidence for the existence of a God, or for the truth of Christianity, as less conclusive than he ordinarily believed, or than he has at other times declared them. At such times, the clouds may be supposed to have hung low upon this lofty mind.

So little inconsistent with a *habit* of intelligent faith are such transient invasions of doubt, or such diminished perceptions of the evidence of truth, that it may even be said that it is only those who have in some measure experienced them, who can be said, in the highest sense, to believe at all. He who has never had a doubt, who believes what he believes for reasons which be-

thinks as irrefragable (if that be possible) as those of a mathematical demonstration, ought not to be said so much to *believe* as to *know*; his belief is to him knowledge, and his mind stands in the same relation to it, however erroneous and absurd that belief may be. It is rather he who believes—not indeed without the exercise of his reason, but without the full satisfaction of his reason—with a knowledge and appreciation of formidable objections—it is this man who may most truly be said intelligently to believe.

While it is true that we are called upon to receive the great truths of Theology, whether natural or revealed, on evidence which is less than demonstrative, we are not to forget that no subjects out of the sciences of magnitude and number, admit of any such demonstration. We are required to do no more in religion, than we are in fact necessitated to do in all the affairs of common life—that is, to form our conclusions upon a sincere and diligent investigation of moral evidence. And, after all, such an arrangement is not only in harmonious analogy with all the conditions of our ordinary life, but, if the present world be indeed a state of moral probation—if it be designed to test our diligence and sincerity, to teach us what is so suitable in a finite and created being, a submissive and confiding posture of mind towards the Infinite Creator—such an arrangement is essential to our course of moral discipline and education. If we are required to believe nothing but what it is impossible that we should doubt—that is, nothing but what it would be a contradiction to deny—where would be the proof of our willingness to believe on the bare assurance of wisdom and knowledge superior to our own? Wise men assuredly consider it as a most important element in the education of their own children, not indeed that they should be taught to believe what they are told without any reason, (and if they have been properly trained, a just confidence in the assurances of their superiors in knowledge will on many subjects be reason sufficient,) yet upon evidence far less than demonstration; indeed, upon evidence far less than they will be able to appreciate, when the lapse of a few brief years has transformed them from children into men. We certainly expect that they will believe many things as *facts* which as yet they cannot fully comprehend—nay, which they tell us are, in appearance, paradoxical; and to rest satisfied with the assurance, that it is in vain to attempt to explain the evidence till they get older and wiser. We are accustomed even to augur the worst results as to the future course and conduct of a youth who has not learned to exercise thus much of practical faith, and who flippantly rejects on the score of *his* not being able

to comprehend them, truths of which he yet has greater evidence, though not *direct* evidence, of their being truths, than he has of the contrary. Now, 'if we have had earthly fathers, and have given them reverence' after this fashion, and when we have become men have applauded our submission as appropriate to our condition of dependence, 'shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?' If, then, the present be a scene of moral education and discipline, it seems fit in itself that the evidence of the truths we believe should be checkered with difficulties and liable to objections;—not strong enough to force assent, nor so obscure as to elude sincere investigation. God, according to the memorable aphorism of Pascal already cited, has afforded sufficient light to those whose object is to see, and left sufficient obscurity to perplex those who have no such wish. All that seems necessary or reasonable to expect is, that as we are certainly not called upon to believe any thing *without* reason, nor without a *preponderance* of reason, so the evidence shall be such as our faculties are capable of dealing with; and that the objections shall be only such as equally baffle us upon any other hypothesis, or are insoluble only because they transcend altogether the limits of the human understanding; which last circumstance can be no valid reason, apart from other grounds, either for accepting or rejecting a given dogma. Now, we contend, that it is in this equitable way that God has dealt with us as moral agents, in relation to all the great truths which lie at the basis of religion and morals; and, we may add, in relation to the divine origin of Christianity. The evidence is all of such a *nature* as we are accustomed every day to deal with and to act upon; while the objections are either such as re-appear in every other theory, or turn on difficulties absolutely beyond the limits of the human faculties. Take, for example, the principal argument which proves the existence of God; the argument which infers from the traces of intelligent design in the universe, the existence of a wise and powerful author. In applying this principle, man only acts as he acts every day of his life in other cases. He acts on a principle which, if he were to doubt, or even affect to doubt, he would be laughed at by his fellow-men as a ridiculous pedant or a crazy metaphysician. Whether indications of design, countless as they are inimitable, with which the whole universe is inscribed, are likely to be the result of chance, is a question which turns on principles of evidence with which man is so familiar that he cannot adopt the affirmative without contradicting all his judgments in every other analogous, or similar, or conceivable case. On the other hand, the objections to the conclusion that there is

some Eternal Being of illimitable power and wisdom are precisely of the nature we have mentioned. A man makes a difficulty, we will suppose, (as well he may,) of conceiving that which has existed from eternity; but, as something certainly exists now, the denial of the existence of such a Being does not relieve from that difficulty, unless the objector plunges into another equally great,—that of supposing it possible for the universe to have sprung into existence without a cause at all. This difficulty, then, is one which re-appears under any hypothesis. Again, we will suppose him to make a difficulty of the ideas of self-subsistence, of omnipresence without extension of parts—of power which creates out of nothing, and which acts simply by volition,—of a knowledge cognizant of each thing and of all its relations—actual and possible, past, present, and to come—to every other thing, at every point of illimitable space, and in every moment of endless duration. But then these are difficulties, the solution of which clearly transcends the limits of the human understanding; and to deny the doctrines which seem established by evidence which we *can* appreciate, because we cannot solve difficulties which lie altogether beyond our capacities, seems like resolving that nothing shall be true but what we can fully comprehend—a principle again which, in numberless other cases, we neither can nor pretend to act upon.

It is much the same with the evidences of Christianity. Whether a certain amount and complexity of testimony are likely to be false; whether it is likely that not one but a number of men would endure ignominy, persecution, and the last extremities of torture, in support of an unprofitable lie; whether such an original fiction as Christianity—if it be fiction—is likely to have been the production of Galilean peasants; whether any thing so sublime was to be expected from fools, or any thing so holy from knaves; whether illiterate fraud was likely to be equal to such a wonderful fabrication; whether infinite artifice may be expected from ignorance, or a perfectly natural and successful assumption of truth from imposture;—these and a multitude of the like questions are precisely of the same *nature*, however they may be decided, with those with which the historian and the advocate, judges, and courts of law are every day required to deal. On the other hand, whether miracles have ever been, or are ever likely to be admitted in the administration of the universe, is a question on which it would demand a far more comprehensive knowledge of that administration than we can possibly possess to justify an *a priori* decision. That they are possible is all that is required; and that, no consistent theist can

deny. Other difficulties of Christianity, as Bishop Butler has so clearly shown, baffle us on every other hypothesis; they meet us as much in the 'constitution of nature,' as in the pages of revelation, and cannot consistently be pleaded against Christianity without being equally fatal to Theism.

There are two things, we will venture to say, at which the philosophers of some future age will stand equally astonished; the one is, that any man should have been called upon to believe *any* mystery, whether of philosophy or religion, without a preponderance of evidence of a nature which he can grasp, or on the mere *ipse dixit* of a fallible creature like himself; the other, that where there is such evidence, man should reject a mystery, merely because it is one. This last, perhaps, will be regarded as the more astonishing of the two. That man, who lives in a dwelling of clay, and looks out upon the illimitable universe through such tiny windows—who stands, as Pascal sublimely says, between 'two infinitudes'—who is absolutely surrounded by mysteries, which he overlooks, only because he is so familiar with them; should doubt a proposition (otherwise well sustained) from its intrinsic difficulty, does not seem very reasonable. But when we further reflect that that very mind which erects itself into a standard of all things, is, of all things, the most ignorant of that which it ought to know best—itsself, and finds there the most inscrutable of all mysteries;—when we reflect that when asked to declare what itself is, it is obliged to confess that it knows nothing about the matter—nothing either of its own essence or its mode of operation—that it is sometimes inclined to think itself material, and sometimes immaterial—that it cannot quite come to a conclusion whether the body really exists or is a phantom, or in what way (if the body really exist) the intimate union between the two is maintained;—when we see it perplexed beyond expression, even to conceive how these phenomena can be reconciled,—proclaiming it to be an almost equal contradiction to suppose that Matter can think, or the Soul be material, or a connexion maintained between two totally different substances, and yet admitting that one of these must be true, though it cannot satisfactorily determine which;—when we reflect on all this, surely we cannot but feel that the spectacle of so ignorant a being refusing to believe a proposition merely *because* it is above its comprehension, is of all paradoxes the most paradoxical, and of all absurdities the most ludicrous.

- ART. VIII.—1. *De la Centralisation.* Par TIMON (M. DE CORMENIN.) 8vo. Paris: 1842.
2. *Etudes Administratives.* Par M. VIVIEN. 8vo. Paris: 1845.
3. *De la Liberté du Travail.* Par CHARLES DUNOYER. 8vo. Paris: 1845.
4. *Notes of a Traveller on the Social and Political State of France, Prussia, &c.* By SAMUEL LAING, Esq. 8vo. London: 1842.

By the books which we have taken for a text, and by various books and essays which we have not specified, our attention has been drawn to a subject of great and growing importance—the tendencies of that form of Government, or rather, that form of Administration, which we must designate, for want of a better title, by the barbarous, though received name, of *Centralization*. Novel as it is, the word has acquired already a good and a bad sense; and, like all other words subject to this ambiguity, it has begotten a crowd of mistakes concerning the thing which it signifies, with a crowd of intentional or unintentional fallacies. For example, the word is often put forward by ostensible advocates of the thing, as a cover for vexatious restraints laid by governments on the governed. On the other hand, the word is frequently employed (in a sense which imports blame), as if it were synonymous with *over-governing*;—that is, an over-meddling by governments with the interests and concerns of their subjects. This confusion of two things which have no natural connexion has armed objectors to improvements with a telling and dangerous fallacy. Any interference by a government with the interests and concerns of its subjects, however expedient that interference may be, is reproached by those who would raise a prejudice against it, with a tendency to *centralization*; and by this brandishing of a word, (which, as being imperfectly understood, is full of mysterious terrors,) they can work on the practical convictions of their hearers or readers, with an effect which they could not produce by a perspicuous statement of their reasons. To obviate the prevalent mistakes concerning Centralization, and to obviate the obstacles to improvement, which they have raised and are likely to raise, is the purpose of the present article. A complete accomplishment of the purpose would surpass our limited space, although it did not surpass our limited powers; but we hope that such of our readers as may care to

investigate the subject, will be helped to adequate conceptions of it by the suggestions which we shall offer to their notice.

Of the many misconceptions of centralization which have fallen under our observation, the following, we think, are the most prevalent and important:—1. It is confounded with over-governing. 2. It is thought incompatible with the spirit, if not with the forms, of free or popular government. 3. It is thought incompatible with local governments of local and popular origin. 4. In France, Prussia, and other continental countries, the governments of localities, with the lower branches of the general administration, are controlled to excess by the heads of the latter; and this abuse of centralization is supposed to be of its essence. To clear the subject of the obscurity which they have cast upon it, we shall examine these misconceptions as fully as our limits will permit. We shall append to our examination of the last a few remarks on a subject which is closely connected with it;—the expediency of the sovereign authority delegating its functions, so far as such delegation consists with the preservation of its power. To our examination of these misconceptions we shall prefix a general outline of centralization itself. In this preliminary outline, we shall endeavour to determine the *notion* of centralization; we shall endeavour to indicate the *conditions* upon which it depends; and we shall notice its *tendencies* to promote or defeat the objects which governments ought to pursue.

A perfect definition of centralization would involve a definition of sovereignty and independent political society; but since a definition of these fundamental notions would not consist with our limited purposes, we confine ourselves to the following assumptions:—That every political society is subject to a person or persons who may be styled the sovereign: That the political powers, active or passive, of this individual or body, are not limitable by positive law; since all the positive laws in force in the given society owe their legal validity to the expressed will of the sovereign or to its tacit sanction: That the other political authorities in the given society are subordinate to the sovereign or supreme one; deriving their political powers from its express or tacit delegation, and holding those powers at its pleasure. The omnipotence of the sovereign authority, as meaning its absolute freedom from legal restraints, is (we conceive) indisputable; being involved in the notion of sovereignty, as the properties of a circle are implied by the definition of the figure. If the sovereignty resides in a single person, the sovereign government is properly a monarchy; if it resides in a body of persons, the government may be styled a republic, (in the wider meaning of the term.) But with this division of governments

into monarchies and republics—or with the division of republics into oligarchies, aristocracies, democracies, limited or mixed monarchies, and other forms innumerable—we have no immediate concern.

In every state whatever, the subordinate authorities bear a relation to the supreme one, which, by a metaphor, may be styled *centralization*; for, owing their being and attributes (by its express or tacit delegation) to that supreme authority, they may be said to radiate from it as from their common centre. But the term *centralization*, as it is usually applied, must signify something less obvious than that universal relation; and this less obvious and less determinate signification is the meaning with which we are concerned. According to the theory of every government, the subordinate authorities *ought* to be dependent on the supreme one: they *ought* to be the ministers or instruments of its expressed or intimated pleasure. For example, the governments of the States forming the American Union are held together by a merely federal tie; but being subordinate to the aggregate of states from which the federal government holds its constitution and attributes, they *ought* to be dependent on this government, (in respect of matters within its competence,) as the authorities in an English county are dependent on the British Parliament. But though it is necessarily supposed by the theory of every government, this ideally perfect dependence is not attainable in practice. There are, however, countries in which the approach made to it is closer than it is in others; and if we abstract the causes (physical and moral) which modify the workings of political institutions, we may say that the degree in which the ideal is realised is determined by the constitution and attributes of the subordinate authorities. Now, if their constitution and functions tend strongly to make them dependent on the supreme one, the government is *centralized*; if their constitution and functions have not that tendency, the government is not centralized; and if, in consequence of this structural defect, they tend strongly to independence of the supreme one, they partake more or less of the nature of sovereign powers. The degree of the tendency to dependence, and the degree of the opposite tendency, which are marked by the opposed terms ‘*centralized*’ and ‘*uncentralized*,’ cannot be determined exactly by general expressions. Like the many other distinctions founded on differences of degrees, which occur in the moral sciences, the distinction is vague in theory. In spite, however, of its vagueness, important theoretical conclusions are deducible from it; and it is applicable, in reference to particular governments, with a sufficient approach to certainty. In fine, if *centralization* has

any determinable import, and if we have succeeded in seizing that import correctly, it lies in the constitution and attributes of the subordinate authorities in a State: it is any such determination, or any such structure or disposition, of the constitution and functions of those authorities, as tends strongly (though in a degree not precisely assignable) to make them practically dependent on the sovereign power. If we have mistaken its import, our mistake is a venial one. We have looked into many disquisitions, and more declamations, about this much extolled and much decried word; but we have not lighted in the very best of them upon any endeavour to determine the nature of the thing.

From the notion of centralization, we should pass directly to its conditions or essentials. Before, however, we proceed to these, we must notice an application (much in vogue since the time of Montesquieu) of the two expressions 'legislative' and 'administrative.' By that application, the mutual relations of the sovereign and subordinate authorities have been much obscured; and, consequently, the difficulties inherent in our subject have been much aggravated. Legislation is the making of laws: administration (in the more usual sense of the word) is the applying of laws (or of rules or principles) to cases arising under them. But to laws and administrative acts, we must add the laws (improperly so called) which are made for and restricted to a specific case or cases. Such, for example, are the *privileges*, beneficial or onerous, of the Roman law; such, also, are *private* acts of Parliament; and such are acts of Parliament (rare as they are invidious) for reaching criminals guilty of anomalous offences. This legislation *in specie*, or calculated for a specific case, is compounded of legislation and administration. As giving a law, (or a something analogous to a law,) it partakes of the former; as applying that law to the case for which it specifically provides, it is nearly allied to the latter. In deeming it a sort of administration, we are following, we believe, the more prevalent usage; and certainly are justified by the nature of the purpose to which it is, or ought to be applied. Unless it be odiously arbitrary, it corrects or helps the existing law, and harmonizes with its maxims and spirit; and is thus an application of that law, (or, at least, of the principles on which that law is founded,) rather than a legislative act. On the division of political *functions* into legislative and administrative, has been founded a corresponding division of political *functionaries*. According to this division, (generally received since Montesquieu,) legislative functions are, or ought to be, the sole business of the sovereign; administrative functions are, or ought to be, the exclusive office of the subordinate authorities. For example, the King (or

Queen Regnant) of the United Kingdom has two political characters. He is the foremost member of the Parliament, as composed of King, Lords, and Commons; and, in another and subordinate character, he is the foremost minister of that sovereign body. According to the division in question, the King, Lords, and Commons, as composing the sovereign Parliament, are the *legislative* power: the King, in his ministerial character, with the aggregate of the functionaries deriving their functions from him, are the *administrative* or executive authority.—In regard to the sovereign, (whether an individual or a body,) this division is palpably false. All political powers, actual and possible, reside actively or passively in the central authority; and all such powers residing in others are merely emanations from it. In large and civilised countries, and in more modern times, the central authority has confined its activity to matters of general interest. Accordingly, it has confined itself to the making of laws concerning those weightier matters, and has delegated its administrative functions. But this proposition, though generally true, must be taken with large limitations. Even in such countries, administrative functions, or functions analogous to them, are often exercised directly by the sovereign power. For example, private acts of Parliament, now so frequent and important, are rather administrative than legislative measures; and declarations of war, treaties of peace, with other measures determining our foreign relations, are, for the most part, in the same predicament. According, indeed, to the theory of the constitution, (or rather to its historical forms,) the determination of these relations belongs to the King; but since the King could not determine them effectually, without the concurrence of the Lords and Commons, they are directly determined, in fact, by the sovereign authority of Parliament.—In regard to the subordinate authorities, the hollowness of the division is equally manifest. By virtue of powers which the sovereign has expressly given them, or has tacitly permitted them to exercise, those authorities in all countries have legislated to a vast extent. For example, the laws made by our numerous colonial governments are directly legislative acts proceeding from a subordinate source. The ordonnances made by the King of the French, for giving detailed effect to the laws of the King and Chambers, are acts of the same character. The Roman private law, at the end of the free republic, had been made chiefly by the direct legislation of the Pretors. The French law, under the old monarchy, owed its existence, in a great measure, to the direct and judicial legislation of the various Parliaments. By the judicial legislation of the English Courts of

Justice, the vast and artificial fabric of the unwritten law has been built on a narrow basis of ancient and rude customs. It is clear, therefore, that 'the legislative power,' or 'the legislature,' is not an appropriate name for the sovereign authority; and that the term 'administrative,' in its more usual sense, does not characterise the authorities subordinate to it. But, in another and more comprehensive sense, administrative (or executive) is equivalent to subordinate or ministerial; and to administer (or to execute) is to give effect, by subordinate legislation or administration, to the will of the sovereign power. In this sense, therefore, the subordinate authorities may be aptly styled administrative; and may be properly distinguished by that epithet from the sovereign authority of which they are ministers or instruments.

From this verbal, but indispensable discussion, we shall pass to the conditions on which centralization depends. We must previously remark, however, that its tendency to strengthen the central authority is aided or impeded by causes extrinsic to political institutions. Such, for example, is the facility or difficulty of communication between the parts of the country; the disposition of their respective populations to union or separation; the attachment or aversion of the bulk of the community to the actual holders of the sovereign power; and the docility or indocility inherent in the national character,—(whether that character be imputable to race, or to a long and steady action of outward influences.) As such causes are innumerable, and combine and cross in innumerable ways, we have not room for a distinct and formal inquiry into their nature and operation. But our review of the political conditions on which centralization depends, and the political causes by which it is helped or thwarted, will involve an occasional notice of the various extrinsic circumstances which variously modify the workings of political institutions.

In reference to centralization, the subordinate authorities in a state may be distributed under two heads;—the governments of localities, and the general administration of the country.—We understand by a *locality*, (the only expression, not altogether new, that is adequate to the extent of our meaning,) any such portion of the country subject to the sovereign power, as is administered by subordinate authorities specially occupied with its peculiar affairs. Accordingly, extensive provinces, extensive dependencies, and even the several states united by a federal union, are just as much localities, in the sense which we attach to the expression, as English counties and municipalities, or French departments and communes. The subordinate authorities, thus administering a locality, may be styled a local government. We understand by the general administration, the aggregate of the subordinate authorities, superior and inferior, who are occupied

with affairs concerning the country at large. Though the governments of localities, and the general administration of the country, are always distinct or distinguishable, they naturally cross and combine in various ways. Thus, functionaries belonging to the latter may exercise their functions within a locality; and, though engaged in the general administration, may be members of the local government. For example, a collector of the general revenue may exercise his functions within the limits of a town; and may combine the character of collector of revenue with that of mayor of the town or member of the town-council.

Though a local government, as being a subordinate authority, emanates immediately or ultimately from the sovereign power, it may originate immediately in various ways. First, it may proceed immediately from the sovereign authority, or from that authority through the general administration; secondly, it may derive its immediate origin from the locality which it administers; lastly, it may partly derive that origin from the former of those two sources, and partly from the latter. For example, the local government of a French department might be chosen by the King, as the head of the general administration; or it might be chosen by a larger or smaller fraction of the inhabitants of the locality; or it might be chosen partly in one of those two ways, and partly in the other. In fact, it originates immediately in the last-mentioned manner. The Prefect is the chief of the local government, as well as a functionary of the general administration. But to the Prefect, who is appointed by the King, is attached a Departmental Council, who are elected by a portion of the inhabitants; and, without the concurrence, or the previous advice of this Council, the acts of the Prefect, as local administrator, are not valid. In reference to centralization, the immediate origin of the local governments is a matter of primary importance. If they proceed immediately from the central authority, (or from the general administration, which commonly sympathises with it,) they naturally tend to dependence upon that authority, so far as their tendencies are determined by political causes. But if a local government, entirely or principally, derives its immediate origin from the locality itself, it naturally tends to clash with the central authority, or with the general administration;—the tendency being greater or less as its territory is larger or smaller, as its immediate origin is more or less popular, and as its attributes are more or less extensive. To make this tendency obvious, and to show the necessity for taking precautions against it, we will advert to the local governments in which it is the strongest: the several governments of states united by a federal union, and the local governments of dependencies. By a short analysis of these gov-

ernments, we shall gain a point of view which commands the subject of centralization, or, at least, an important part of it.

The nature of the States' Governments (whether they are sovereign or subordinate?) has been much discussed by the parties which divide the American Union; although it is clearly determined (as we presume to think) by the purposes and provisions of the federal constitution. As that constitution was framed by a convention which represented the several states, a like extraordinary convention may alter or annul it at their pleasure. The aggregate of the several states, as represented by such a convention, is, therefore, sovereign throughout the Union. The federal government, which is its creature and minister, and the states' governments, whose powers it can modify at its pleasure, are equally subordinate to it. But though this aggregate, as thus represented, is properly a sovereign body, its active functions are merely constituent. It defines the constitution and attributes of the federal government, and thus modifies (by implication) the powers of the states' governments. It leaves, however, the ordinary business of a government to those respective authorities; the federal government administering the affairs of the Union, and each of the states' governments administering those of its locality. Since it is merely constituent, and since its interventions are separated by long intervals, the sovereign authority in the American Union may be styled constituent or latent; as a sovereign authority which habitually governs may be styled acting or ostensible. That the federal government is merely ministerial, cannot be doubted; the specified powers which it holds from the constituent sovereign, rendering its character obvious. But, the federation apart, each of the states' governments would be supreme and independent; it has only relinquished, by its accession to the federation, a specified portion of its sovereign powers; and it may be said, with some plausibility, that the infinitude of powers which it retains is equivalent to sovereignty. To this it may be answered, that its powers are liable to abridgment by the constituent authority; and that no government, subject to such a liability, can be deemed sovereign and independent. Nay, the constituent authority, for the purpose of strengthening the federation, might deprive the states' governments of all but specified powers;—endowing the federal government with the infinite residue, and thus giving it a character approaching to sovereignty. In that event, the subordination of the states' governments would not admit of a doubt; and since the federal government, notwithstanding the enlargement of its powers, would be obviously the creature and minister of the federal constitution, its subordinate character would be equally indisputable.

The following, therefore, are the characters of a federal state : —1. The federal government and the states' governments are subordinate to a constituent sovereign. 2. The will of the federal government (as to matters within the competence which it derives from the federal constitution) is enforced in the several states by its own authority and instruments. In every state, therefore, there are two administrative authorities ; —the administration of the federal state, created by the federation, and the state's or local government. And here is the practical difference (a wide and important one) between a federal state and a mere confederation of states. The latter is a knot of states severally independent, though bound together by an alliance calculated for permanency. The assembly, or other organ, which determines their common affairs, is neither sovereign, nor the minister of a sovereign authority. It is merely a congress of ambassadors from the several states, agreeing on resolutions concerning the interests of the confederacy ; and these resolutions are enforced in every state by the authority and instruments of its peculiar government. 3. The powers of the federal government are specified and limited ; and, consequently, each of the states' governments possesses an infinitude of powers, notwithstanding the federal union. This, in fact, is a character of a federal state, though not implied by the idea. If the powers of the states' governments were specified by the federal constitution, it would give the federal government an infinitude of powers, and make it in practice nearly supreme. But if the several states could consent to so intimate a union, they would probably go further, and consent to a perfect fusion ; the machinery of a federal state being far less simple and convenient, than that of a state with an acting and ostensible sovereign.

The position of a dependency is different from that of a state united to others by a federal union. Speaking generally, (for the proposition might be limited by some unimportant exceptions,) a dependency is governed by the sovereign authority from which the local government derives its constitution and attributes. For example, all our colonial governments emanate from the British Parliament, immediately or ultimately ; and the same sovereign authority governs the colonies directly, or through various departments of the general administration of the empire. But, notwithstanding the interventions of the sovereign power, the machinery of the local government is as ample as that of a supreme one : its powers, moreover, are as various and extensive as those of a state's government in a federal state : in short, it possesses as much of the constitution and attributes belonging to a sovereign government, as consists with the sovereignty and the occasional interventions of the government to which it is subordinate.

This description applies, in somewhat different degrees, to all our colonial governments; and it applies, in an eminent degree, to the local government which governed Ireland when forming a dependency upon Great Britain. It were superfluous to dwell upon consequences which the description plainly implies. If the local government, entirely or principally, originate immediately in the dependency itself, it will obviously tend to clash with the sovereign authority. If its local origin be of a popular character, and its territory be large and populous, the tendency will obviously be strong—as strong as the tendency of a state's government, with a similar origin and territory, to conflict with the administration of the federal state. It is hardly necessary to add, that federal government, or government by a system of dependencies, may be rendered expedient or inevitable by physical or moral causes; or that the only purpose of our strictures upon them is to show their intrinsic inconsistency with centralization.

It appears, we think, from the foregoing analysis, that the conditions of centralization, in reference to the governments of localities, may be indicated as follows:—1. The functions of those governments must be specified and limited; and must not consist (like the attributes of states' governments, or the local governments of dependencies) in infinite aggregates of powers. 2. Their respective territories must not be sufficiently extensive to give them a moral weight rendering their dependence precarious. If the territory and population which are administered by a local government are a large fraction of those of the country, it will tend to antagonize with the sovereign authority, in spite of any limitations which may be put upon its functions. These conditions (with the details which they imply) being observed and satisfied, local governments of local and popular origin are helps rather than hindrances to centralization; tending to strengthen the influence of the central authority, as well as to give to the localities themselves the best administration of their local affairs. But, intending to revert to local governments in another part of this article, we pass at present to those conditions of centralization which lie in the constitution and attributes of the general administration.

There is in every country an administrative authority, which may be called the head of the general administration. By this presiding authority, the departments of that administration are linked to the sovereign power; and, by the same authority, those departments, with the functionaries whom they include, are immediately or mediately directed or controlled. In pure monarchies, this presiding authority may be placed in a single minister, but is commonly entrusted to a council of ministers. In limited monarchies, the single person, (clothed with a mo-

narchical title,) who is the foremost member of the sovereign body, is also the head of the general administration; but since he delegates his functions to a council of ministers, (or, at least, exercises his functions with and under their advice,) this presiding authority virtually resides in them, rather than in him.* In republican governments of other forms or names, this presiding authority may reside in a single person, but dwells more commonly in a number of persons; and (according to the infinite varieties of their several constitutions) is exercised directly by the head of the general administration, or virtually delegated to a body of ministers.

In respect of the general administration, (thus linked to the sovereign authority,) the conditions of centralization may be indicated as follows:—1. The departments and sub-departments into which the administrative body is divided and subdivided must be clearly arranged. 2. The administrative functions distributed amongst them must be clearly determined. 3. The places in the administrative hierarchy, respectively occupied by its several functionaries, must be clearly marked; the authorities in the same hierarchy to which they are respectively responsible, clearly designated; and the natures of their respective responsibilities, with the respective modes of enforcing them, clearly defined. These conditions being observed and satisfied, an unbroken chain of subordination connects the lowest functionary with the central authority. The general administration, through its head, is linked immediately to the sovereign power; its several departments, through their respective heads, are linked immediately to the head of the general administration; and every individual functionary is linked to the head of his department, by the clear determination of his place, his functions, and his responsibilities. The clear arrangement of the administrative machine facilitates the supervision of its movements; so that the central authority can keep it to its destined direction, with comparative ease and certainty. By the same clearness of arrangement, the

* *Princeps*—(first or foremost)—is the only name for a limited monarch that expresses his position and character. It was the proper and constitutional title of the earlier Roman Emperors; who, on their accession to office, were invested with specified powers, by a grant of the *plebs*, or senate. Ostensibly, therefore, that government, like our own, was what is absurdly called a mixed or limited monarchy. In substance, indeed, the difference between the governments is measureless. That was a despotic monarchy, disguised by the forms of a republic; this is a liberal republic, adorned and consolidated by the forms of a monarchy.

departments and sub-departments are prevented from clashing, as well as from resisting or thwarting the sovereign power. Not being covered with the mystery of a crude and confused organisation, the administrative machine is not impervious to discerning observation and criticism; and the endeavours of the central authority to control and direct its movements, are, therefore, enlightened and assisted by an intelligent public opinion.

From the conditions of centralization, we pass to certain causes which heighten its effect, but which can hardly be ranked with its conditions or essentials.

In large and civilised countries, and in more modern times, the central authority has commonly limited its activity to matters of general and permanent concern. Commonly confining itself to the making of laws regarding those weightier matters, it has delegated many of its legislative powers, and more of its administrative functions. By extending this reasonable policy as far as it might extend it with advantage to the country, it would heighten its efficiency and strengthen its power. Relieved from a multitude of burdensome functions which it might better exercise by subordinate functionaries, it would be able to perform the business which it reserved to itself with mature deliberation as well as despatch; and, moreover, it could give to the supervision and control of the administrative machine more attention than it can bestow at present upon that important office of the central authority. But, since the central authority consults the interests of its power, by delegating its functions up to a certain point, such delegation has a centralizing tendency, if it be not a condition of centralization. What are the functions which it should exercise directly, and what are those which it ought to delegate, cannot be determined by general expressions; nor would any attempt to draw the line of demarcation consist with our limited space. We shall, however, revert to the subject in the last part of the present article.

It seems to be supposed by most of the writers who have treated of centralization, that *homogeneity*, or uniformity, of institutions constitutes its essence. They seem to suppose, for example, that where a government is perfectly centralized, one system of law obtains throughout the country; that the respective governments of the several localities have been cast in a common mould; that the departments and sub-departments of the general administration have been struck off from a common type; that the divisions of the country, for general administrative purposes, have been cut out on a common pattern. Now, this uniformity simplifies the administrative machine; lays it bare to discerning observation and criticism; and

thus enables the central authority to watch and control its movements with comparative facility and effect. Accordingly, this uniformity is highly centralizing, where the conditions which we have passed in review have been observed and satisfied. But it appears clearly, from an obvious and decisive fact, that mere uniformity of institutions is not identical with centralization. This uniformity may exist, to an eminent degree, in a country ruled by a government which is not centralized at all; nay, in a country made up of states which are not subject to a common sovereign. The United States of America, though subject to a common sovereign, are loosely united by a federal union. Germany is held together by a still looser and weaker tie;—by a mere confederation of independent states, or by a federal bond which is hardly closer or stronger. Nevertheless, the political institutions of these divided countries are scarcely less homogeneous than those of France herself. The respective legal systems of the several American States, (excepting two or three which have lately acceded to the Union,) are substantially one and the same. A *Common Law of America*, abstracted from those several systems, has been admitted by the ablest American jurists; and is (we believe) the law applied by the federal tribunals to certain of the cases within their competence. In Germany, the homogeneity of the several legal systems is equally remarkable. The *Common Law of Germany* forms the bulk of the system which obtains in each of the states; although, in some of the states, (as, for example, in Prussia,) that universal law has been reduced to a code, and has taken a new name along with a systematic form.* We have said that uniformity of institutions (where certain conditions have been satisfied) has a highly centralizing tendency. It must be added, however, that it tends to weaken the central government, and to defeat the ends of centralization, where it is accepted with reluctance by considerable portions of the governed. The rage of the French nation for forcing its nationality on others, is a principal cause of its inaptitude for colonizing foreign countries, and for holding them in permanent subjec-

* See the following works, each admirable in its kind, for the Common Law of America, and the Common (or Universal) Law of Germany:—
 'The Jurisdiction of the Federal Courts,' by Mr Duponceau. 'Einleitung in das Deutsche Privatrecht, (Introduction to the Private Law of Germany,)' by Charles Frederick Eichhorn. 'System des Heutigen Römischen Rechts, (Systematic Exposition of the Roman Law, as received and applied in Germany,)' by Frederick Charles von Savigny.

tion. In her ancient policy towards her foreign dependencies, England herself was too much influenced by a puerile conceit of her own institutions; scourging dependent populations to whom her institutions were not intelligible, with English law, administered through English procedure, by technical English lawyers. Happily for herself, and the nations dependent upon her, she has taken to a better way during the last half century. From her vast experience in colonial government, she has learned to respect their opinions and manners, and to touch their institutions with a cautious and tender hand. To this policy, not less prudent than magnanimous and humane, we must mainly attribute her wonderful success in attaching her Hindoo subjects to her naturally invidious rule; and in tincturing an Asiatic people whose prejudices were all but indelible, with the morality and the knowledge of Christian and civilised Europe.

From the notion and conditions of centralization, we proceed to its tendencies as regarding the welfare of the governed;—limiting our attention, however, in this preliminary outline, to such considerations concerning those tendencies as could not be inserted conveniently in the subsequent portion of this article.

The administrative authorities, local and general, are, in theory, dependent on the sovereign power. To realise this ideal, is the direct end of centralization. It is, therefore, an instrument of good, in the hands of a good government: But is it not an instrument of evil in the hands of a bad one? We think it will appear, on a little reflection, that this seeming difficulty is nearly or altogether groundless. A regular administration is a complex and artificial machine. In a country not proportionally civilised, such a machine could not be constructed; or, if constructed on a foreign model, could not be worked. This appears from the history of countries in which the administrative system has attained or approached to regularity. That system, at its origin, was utterly crude and confused; and though it has emerged at last from primeval and barbarous disorder, it owes its comparative regularity to a toilsome elaboration continued through a long series of progressive ages. But in a country whose government is centralized, the administrative system is highly regular. A high civilisation, therefore, is an imperative moral condition of centralization. In imperfectly civilized countries whose governments are apparently centralized, (as, for example, Russia,) the centralization is merely formal. In such a country, the administrative authorities, however perfect their arrangement, are not *practically* dependent on the sovereign power; since the end of the elaborate and well-meant system is defeated or thwarted by causes lying in the barbarity of the nation. Men fitted for

the higher administrative offices, by intellectual and moral qualifications, are not sufficiently numerous to supply the wants of the administration. The higher functionaries are infected, therefore, with the ignorance, the venality, the negligence, and the other disqualifying defects (intellectual and moral) of the lower functionaries whom they ought to superintend and control; and since they spring from the barbarity of the nation, the vices of the administration are not corrected or mitigated by an intelligent public opinion and a commanding public morality. The central authority itself, however public-spirited, is inevitably affected by the barbarity of the nation. It is not sufficiently enlightened to adopt the effectual means of obtaining from its subjects the largest sum of obedience. By occasional, irregular, and violent exercises of its power, (after the manner of an Asiatic despot,) it here and there chastises its offending functionaries, or redresses the wrongs proceeding from their offences. But, by repressing public opinion, it prevents the formation of a *good* public opinion; and, consequently, it debars itself from the effectual means of detecting and preventing such offences, and of curing those vices in the administrative system from which they immediately flow. By its arbitrary exercises of its power, (however beneficent their purpose,) it perpetuates in the body of its subjects, and therefore in its administrative functionaries, the anarchical spirit of disobedience which naturally accompanies barbarity. It forgets that arbitrary government, in its remoter and general consequences, is nearly equivalent to no government at all; and that a government which would obtain for itself the greatest sum of obedience, must scrupulously respect the laws which it imposes on the governed. But if a government really centralized supposes a people highly civilised, the tendencies of such a government (whatever be the form of the sovereignty) will be beneficent in the main. The notions of the people about the ends of government, and about the means of attaining them, will be enlightened and just. As holding the same notions, or in its own despite, the government will aim at the ends sanctioned by a commanding opinion; and the administrative authorities, as its obedient instruments, will keep to the line of duties which is set to them by government and people. That it may obtain for itself the largest sum of obedience, the government will respect the laws which it imposes on the governed; and, for the same reason, it will take good care that its legislative and administrative measures shall tend really and apparently to promote the general good. It appears, therefore, that where a government is really centralized, it governs by maxims which are good in themselves, and which are also consecrated by a formidable

public opinion. But since constitutional securities for good government rest immediately on the same moral power, those maxims are equivalent, in no inconsiderable degree, to these more formal guarantees; insomuch, that a government which is not popular in form, but which is really or effectually centralized, will be administered in the spirit of governments which are popular in form and substance. In fine, if the form of the government be good; centralization, with the causes from which it springs, will enhance its good tendencies; if the form of the government be bad, they will go far to correct its bad ones. We are led to remark, by these considerations on the tendencies of centralization, that the utility of legislative and administrative improvements is far less doubtful than that of reforms in the constitutions of supreme governments. The good of the governed *ought to be* the end of government; and in civilised countries it *is*, to a great extent, the end which the government pursues. This it may promote directly, by its own legislation and administration, and those of its subordinates. This it may promote less directly, by acting, through the same means, on the opinions and sentiments of its subjects. By a good legislation and administration, it diffuses insensibly, throughout the country, an enlightened opinion and morality which powerfully re-act upon itself; and which supply, to no inconsiderable extent, the absence or defects of constitutional guarantees. To this it may be added, that constitutional reforms can rarely be brought about without a resort to violence; and the demoralising tendencies of a violent reform far outweigh its direct tendencies to promote the progress of the country towards better political institutions. But, commonly, legislative and administrative improvements have not to encounter the resistance which is always opposed to reforms in the constitutions of supreme governments. Generally speaking, the resistance to the former is far less formidable and obstinate;—coming from the sinister interests, real or imaginary, of particular and limited classes. The intelligent and impartial public is ready to urge them on the government; and the government itself (where it can see its way) is disposed to promote them, or to yield to the public voice.

Having analysed the notion of centralization—passed its conditions in review, and noticed its tendencies as regarding the welfare of the governed—we shall examine those misconceptions of its essence and properties with which we are especially concerned;—taking them in the order in which we stated them at the outset.

I. Centralization, as it is commonly conceived, is mistaken for over-governing. A centralized government, according to

the same conception, is an over-regulating, over-restraining, over-protecting government;—paternal, as its friends would call it; a pestilent busy-body, as it would be called by its enemies. We think that this is the conception which is commonly associated with the word; and our impression is confirmed by two of the books whose titles we have prefixed to this Article—*De la Liberté du Travail*, by Mr Dunoyer; and *Notes of a Traveller*, by Mr Laing. M. Dunoyer, in the first volume of his admirable treatise, examines the different degrees to which men's faculties have unfolded themselves, in the successive stages of advancing society. In one chapter, principally relating to France, he considers that stage of society in which the government is centralized, but also interferes to excess with the interests and concerns of the governed. He has entitled this chapter, *De la Liberté compatible avec une centralisation exagérée*.* It appears, however, from the contents, that the thing which he brands with the name of *excessive centralization*, is nothing but the meddling of the French administrative authorities with matters which ought to be abandoned to private discretion. With reference, indeed, to the legitimate province of government, it is clear that a government cannot be *excessively* centralized, or, in other words, *excessively* efficient; which is implicitly admitted by M. Dunoyer himself in many passages of this very chapter. It is stated, or plainly supposed, in many passages of Mr Laing's *Notes*, that centralization is nothing but another expression for government interference with matters which should be left to private prudence.†

Having shown that the mistake with which we are presently concerned has been made by acute writers, we shall show that centralization has no tendency whatever to lead a government to excessive interference; and that the over-meddling of certain centralized governments is not an effect of their centralization, but a consequence of other causes.

The radical cause of that over-meddling, in all the countries subject to those governments; is the false opinion prevalent amongst the population, concerning what may be called *the legitimate province of government*;—that is, the extent and limits of its *useful* interference with the interests and concerns of the governed. In France, Prussia, and Austria, protection for national industry against the competition of foreigners, is still part and parcel of the economical creed of the majority: the

* Vol. i. p. 278.

† Pp. 64, 65, and elsewhere.

same may be affirmed of police regulations determining the prices of provisions, or interfering with the rates of wages or the hours of labour;—nay, the vexatious passport system, considered as a precaution against crimes, is generally regarded with favour, and endured with cheerful resignation. In these cases, (produced as examples,) and in many analogous cases, the cause of the over-governing is the false and prevalent opinion; the government condescending to that opinion, rather than sharing in the errors on which it is founded. And although the government were deeply imbued with all the prejudices of its subjects, the evil would spring from that opinion as its ultimate and efficient cause; for, however blind and obstinate the prejudices of the government might be, it would speedily yield to a sound opinion widely diffused and clearly pronounced. This explanation, indeed, is not absolutely complete; since some of the vexations inflicted by the governments in question come from their own fears, rather than the prejudices of their subjects. Such, for example, is the annoying supervision exercised by the political police; and such is the passport system, as a security against enemies of the state, and not as a precaution against ordinary crimes. These vexations, however, though imputable to the fears of the governments, are the result of a cause extrinsic to centralization,—the revolutionary state of Europe, and, indeed, of the world, during the last half century. Exaggerating the importance of the revolutionary symptoms, and heartily frightened by them, the governments in question fell into the policy which is naturally prompted by a panic; just as our own government, influenced by an unworthy alarm, suspended the securities for personal liberty, and subjected aliens to arbitrary removal from the country. In consequence of the progress made by public opinion, and the happy subsidence of revolutionary agitations, the excessive governing has already diminished, and the disposition to it is rapidly declining. The annoyances inflicted by the political police are fast disappearing. The vexatious passport system has been greatly relaxed. The protective system itself (rooted, as it is, in inveterate prejudices, and backed, as it is, by formidable sinister interests) has already undergone modifications which strike at its principle; and, though it is bolstered up by political and temporary causes, it has received its death-blow from the great economical lesson which the Queen of industry and commerce has recently given to the world.

That centralization and over-governing have no natural connexion, is shown by a decisive fact; the uncentralized governments which the governments in question have superseded, were more vexatious than their centralized successors.

Of the countries subject to these governments, France is the only one which our limits will permit us to notice; and, with regard to France, we shall merely refer to an interesting chapter in the generally interesting volumes of M. Dunoyer. Although he chastises, with merited and fearless severity, the excessive meddling of the present centralized government, he proves that the over-governing under the old monarchy was much greater and far more odious. In the chapter in question, (which relates to the state of France under that chaotic government,) he exposes the mischievous obstacles to the commerce and industry of the kingdom, which arose from the enormous privileges (or political powers) of the various provincial and other local governments; with the mischievous and tyrannous restraints on the natural freedom of labour, which arose from the similar privileges of the incorporated professions and trades.* The obvious truth is, that the over-governing imputed to centralization descends from states of society in which centralization was impossible. It comes from the crude conceptions of the legitimate province of government, which were naturally entertained by the middle ages and the ages immediately following them—ages which were just as incapable of centralized and regular government, as of conceiving the advanced science and the advanced industry which (like centralization) are products of a high civilization. Inasmuch as our civilization, and especially our social civilization, is still far from complete, these crude conceptions of earlier ages have not entirely lost their mischievous authority; and, consequently, they have still a considerable influence (though a constantly decreasing influence) on the policy of centralized and other civilized governments.

We think it follows clearly from the foregoing statistical and historical references, that the over-governing imputed to centralization arises from causes extrinsic to the latter. That the two things have no natural connexion, follows with equal clearness from this consideration: by abstaining from over-governing, as far as the prejudices of their subjects will allow them to abstain from it, centralized governments (like other governments) would consult their own interests. This will appear sufficiently from a short summary of the evils which a government brings upon itself by excessive meddling. 1. By needlessly extending its functions, it wantonly aggravates its necessarily heavy labours, and becomes proportionally incompetent to its proper duties. 2. By meddling with interests and concerns which ought to be left to private discretion, it makes itself responsible, in the eyes

* Tome i. Livre iv. Ch. vi. *De la Liberté compatible avec le Privilège.*

of its subjects, for their natural privations and sufferings. A people fashioned by a so-called paternal government, loses (with its self-reliance) its energy, foresight, and fortitude; looks to its government for good which its government cannot give, and for protection from evils which its government cannot prevent.*

3. By regulating the application of labour and capital, for the purpose of rendering them more productive, it affects to possess a command over the sources of production, which, if real, would justify Socialism; and it thus contributes to turn its subjects from the possible means of improving their condition, to schemes which are big with deception, disaffection, and anarchy. 4. It irritates all its subjects who are sufficiently intelligent and impartial to condemn its pernicious meddling. Moreover, it irritates all who, without condemning the system, are incidentally hurt by it in some of their particular interests. For example, it can hardly grant protection to one class of producers, without visible damage to other classes; and by consequence, its paternal care, instead of contenting all of them, sets them at odds with one another, and with their common parent. 5. Whilst, in these various ways, it weakens its authority with its subjects, it retards their advancement in industry and opulence. By thus striking at the source from which it draws its revenue, it abridges its natural means of supporting the establishments which are necessary to its own security and their welfare; and, consequently, it abridges its power and consideration relatively to those of governments which are liberal and wise enough to stick to their proper province.

Abstracting the extrinsic causes which affect the operation of political institutions, a centralized government is far less likely than another to surpass the limits of useful interference. The administrative system being comparatively regular, is not concealed by a crude and confused organization, from the supervision of the government, or the observation of the public. The proper province of legislation and administration (including the extent and limits of useful government-intervention) may, therefore, be surveyed and measured by government and public, with comparative facility and precision; so that the government

* This is forcibly put by M. Dunoyer. Populations (says he) whose government meddles with every thing, come, in time, to think it responsible for every thing: 'à l'accuser que lui des maux qu'elles éprouvent; du mauvais succès de leurs spéculations, de l'encombrement des marchés, de l'inégalité des conditions, de l'infortune des classes les moins heureuses; et finalement, à vouloir toujours lui demander compte du résultat de leur sottise ou de leur folie.'—Tome i. p. 303.

(kept to its right line by enlightened opinion) is less likely to meddle needlessly, or to neglect the matters with which it ought to interfere. It is well remarked by M. Dunoyer, that the French Revolution, in the first instance, sharpened the ancient vexations;—the oppressive powers of the ancient local governments, and incorporated professions and trades, being transferred by that great convulsion to the vigorous and ruthless hands of the new central tyranny. In consequence, however, of the more systematic form which those powers received from the new governments, their extent, nature, and tendencies became comparatively obvious; and the attention of the intelligent public having thus been drawn to their tendencies, the ancient prejudices in which they originated have insensibly lost much of their former authority and influence.

The legitimate province of government is one question; the tendency of centralization to lead to excessive governing, is another question. But since the questions are strongly associated, we should be tempted to examine the former at considerable length, if our limits would permit the departure from our proper subject. With those limits before us, we can only venture on the following remark:—In consequence of a vehement and natural reaction against the disposition to excessive governing, many crude and untenable maxims have been hastily advanced by the advocates of freedom. Unless understood with limitations which reduce them to nothing at all, some of these maxims (as, for example, the celebrated *laissez faire*) are plainly false and absurd; since they plainly imply assumptions which would prove the inutility of law and government. According to another maxim, a government ought to confine itself to purely defensive functions;—the prevention of wrongs, and the protection of the country against foreign enemies. But though it is more plausible than the sweeping *laissez faire*, this also is radically false. It rests at bottom upon no reason at all; inasmuch as the very functions which it would permit to governments, are, by remote consequence, much more than purely defensive. It appears to us, that this maxim (with others of the like import) is doubly mischievous. It tends to prevent ~~the~~ good (in the way, for example, of public education) which governments may directly accomplish notwithstanding the slenderness of their means; and it weakens the cause of freedom, which it seeks to support, by placing it on a false basis. And here we must desist from this short digression. The legitimate province of government, or the extent and limits of its useful interference, is a subject (we presume to think) which has not been sufficiently sifted; inso-

much, that an accurate and intelligible exposition of it would fully occupy the space assigned to an article.

II. The misconception which we have examined confounds centralization with over-governing. By the mistake which we shall now consider, it is deemed incompatible with the substance or spirit of what is commonly called free government.

Where the sovereign power resides in a body of persons, forming a fraction of the society, which may be deemed a large one, the government is popular or democratic; or, at least, the constitution of the government partakes largely of the popular or democratic element. According to an ancient and established notion, such a government is *free*: that is, the *subjects* of such a government (including the individual members of the sovereign body itself) are freer from political restraints, *not needed by the general good*, than the subjects of governments differently constituted.*

* In so far as a man is *not* restrained, he is *free*. The kinds of the freedom which he enjoys, are as numerous as the kinds of the restraints to which he is *not* subject. He, therefore, is politically or civilly free in as far as he is not restrained by the *πολις*, *civitas*, or state. A distinction, however, has been taken between civil and political liberty; though the only difference is, that *civil* comes from the Latin, and *political* from the Greek. According to this distinction, civil liberty signifies liberty in the vulgar sense of the word: it means the liberty of doing or forbearing, which every state (monarchical or republican) permits to its subjects. But, according to the same distinction, political liberty signifies political *power*: it means that part in the sovereign power, which, in a country popularly governed, is held by a member of the sovereign body. Hence civil liberty is opposed to political; and a look of paradoxical profundity is given to familiar truths, by virtue of a double meaning put upon a word. 'That a nation having *political*, may want *civil* liberty,' is a maxim which looks pregnant. It expresses, however, nothing more than the following familiar, though important truth: that in a country popularly governed, the subject community (including the individual members of the sovereign body itself) may be oppressed or annoyed by useless restraints.

The distinction in question has been much insisted on by Mr Laing, (pp. 61—76,) who also tells us (p. 98,) that civil liberty (or liberty) ought to be the end of government. This old conceit is just as groundless as that newfangled distinction; and we are surprised at finding it revived by so acute a writer as Mr Laing. It were nearer the mark to say, that the immediate end of government is restraint; though, in respect to its ultimate end, (the general good,) restraint and liberty are merely means. It is only by abridging their natural liberty, that the state can secure to its subjects the enjoyment of their legal rights—

Into the truth of this notion, or into the limitations and explanations with which it ought to be received, we shall not stay to enquire; inasmuch as the question with which we are concerned, is the alleged inconsistency of centralization with the substance of popular government.

So far as we have observed, this allegation (or this supposition) depends upon a train of reasoning, which may be stated as follows:—As a centralized government is regular or systematic, the administration of the country, and especially the general administration, is needlessly divided and subdivided; and from this needless multiplication of departments and sub-departments, results a *needless multiplication of paid functionaries*. But this unnecessary number of paid government-offices, leads to a further consequence. It gives to the central authority, in monarchies, and it gives to the head of the administration, in limited monarchies and other republican governments, large means of corruption or influence. These are used in monarchies, to maintain and perpetuate monarchy; and they are used in governments of popular form and appearance, to render the government, in substance and spirit, a monarchy or narrow aristocracy.—The alleged *needless multiplication of paid functionaries*, is manifestly the only

including their legal right to the remnant of natural liberty which it tacitly permits them to retain.)

According to the distinction which we have just noticed, liberty, in one of its senses, signifies *power*. As used by M. Dunoyer, it bears an analogous meaning. The first title of his book is, ‘*De la Liberté du travail*.’ The second is, ‘*Exposé des conditions dans lesquelles les forces humaines s'exercent avec le plus de puissance*.’ Looking at its purview and tenor, we should give to his book some such title as the following:—‘An exposition of the conditions on which the human faculties (as directed to economical ends) are the most advantageously applied.’ Without the limiting clause inserted in the parenthesis, this title would not indicate correctly the purview and tenor of the book; which is especially concerned with political economy, though it frequently travels into other social sciences. Now he manifestly means by the term liberty, the human faculties or powers as applied to the best advantage; and not (as one might infer from the titles of his book) the liberty of so applying them. We cannot but wish (with all our respect for the writer) that he had abstained from this innovation on established language. It needlessly aggravates the intrinsic difficulties of his subject; and it renders the word liberty (which is the very worst stumbling-block in the mental and moral sciences) more ambiguous than it was before. It speaks volumes for his reasoning powers, that the innovation has not betrayed him (in as far as we have observed) into any important inconsistency.

basis on which the reasoning rests. But assuming that countries ruled by centralized governments suffer from this evil, the evil may inhere in centralization, or it may arise from causes extrinsic to centralization. Accordingly, we shall endeavour to show, in the first place, that centralization in itself has no tendency to produce the evil; and in the next place, that the evil arises exclusively, in the countries in question, from causes incidental to *uncentralized*, as well as to centralized governments.

1. It is usual with advocates of popular institutions, to extol the advantages of *self-government*;—an expression which signifies (if it signifies any thing) the government of a political society by the society itself. But self-government, as thus understood, is simply impossible. However democratic the government, a large portion of the society—namely the non-adults—are confined by physical causes to the condition of *passive* citizens;—that is, not partakers in the sovereignty, but merely subjects of the sovereign body. If (as has been the practice in all societies) women are also excluded from the sovereign body, the number of the *active* or ruling citizens is still further reduced. If (as has been the practice in almost all societies) servitude, extreme poverty, or any other cause indicating a want of intelligence or independence, be also a ground of exclusion from the sovereign body, the active citizens, even under governments eminently democratic, are a decided-minority of the entire population. To this it must be added, that the sovereign body, in the natural course of things, is divided into opposite parties; and in fact, if not by the theory of the constitution, the stronger or ascendant party rules the minority of the active citizens, as well as the great mass of the merely subject community. And hence results, where the ascendant party abuses its power, *not* a tyranny of the majority, (as has been said,) but the tyranny of a small minority of the entire population of the country. In reference, therefore, to the sovereign authority, self-government is plainly impossible. In reference to the administrative authorities, its impossibility is equally manifest. These, it is obvious, are a fraction of the society, appointed immediately or mediately by the sovereign body, or by the body which represents it and acts as the organ of its will.—Whatever, therefore, be the form of the government, a political society is administered by persons receiving their authority from the sovereign power; or, in other words, by *functionaries*, (paid or voluntary.)

It is necessary to the welfare of a political society, that a certain number of administrative functions (or a certain quantity of administrative business) should be performed;—the number of functions (or quantity of business) required by the public wants

depending on the size of the territory, the amount of the population, and a multitude of other causes equally variable. The number of the functionaries absolutely necessary for the due performance of these indispensable functions, depends on the structure of the administrative system. If the organization of the system be crude and confused, the number, naturally, is comparatively large; if the organization be regular or systematic, the number, naturally, is comparatively small; for the more orderly the distribution of the various functions, the more easy is it, *without damaging the efficiency of the system*, to combine or cumulate functions in one and the same functionary. It is, therefore, the tendency of centralization, which supposes a regular administration, to reduce the functionaries required by the public wants to the lowest possible number.

Those who insist on the tendency of centralized and regular government to multiply functionaries beyond the public wants, seem to have intended another objection. It appears to us, that they mean to object to the policy of paying the requisite functionaries out of the public revenue; and to insist that the requisite functions might and ought to be performed by unpaid or voluntary officers. Now if an administrative system, managed by paid functionaries, be more efficient than a system abandoned to voluntary officers, the policy of paying functionaries is of the essence of centralization. It contributes, at least, in a high degree, to accomplish a principal end of centralized and regular government;—the giving the greatest efficiency, as well as the greatest order, to the administrative system of the country. We therefore shall consider for a moment, the efficiency of an administrative system administered on the voluntary principle.

In countries, (as, for example, England,) in which considerable fortunes are not rare, the higher administrative offices, which confer distinction on the holders, may be filled efficiently by voluntary officers. But the lower offices are so numerous, and confer so little distinction on those who hold them, that men qualified for them, by personal qualifications, will rarely consent to fill them without pay. Though men personally qualified were willing to fill them without pay, men thus qualified, and also sufficiently rich to serve the public gratuitously, would not be nearly numerous enough to satisfy the wants of the administration. It may, therefore, be affirmed generally, that the lower offices (which commonly demand, notwithstanding their obscurity, personal qualifications possessed by few) will not be occupied by men competent to discharge them efficiently. To this it may be added, that the actual occupants, competent or incompetent, are commonly content to discharge

them *taliter qualiter*;—treating them as a pastime rather than a serious business. An efficient discharge of obscure duties is not a way to distinction; nor is the loss of an office not paid in money or praise, a thing to be seriously feared. The administrative authorities to whom the volunteer is responsible, are disposed to wink at his defaults if not at his misdeeds. After all, (think they,) he is *not paid* for his services; to look a gift horse in the mouth, is not grateful or gracious; and if we dismissed him, or drove him to resign, others might be discouraged from serving the country for nothing. Although a large experience would seem to warrant the argument, we will not insist on the tendency of the voluntary system to render the administrative officers venal and corrupt; for, in all civilized countries, the restraints of conscience and opinion are sufficiently strong to prevent the frequent occurrence of so gross a consequence. We think that the other reasons to which we have adverted, prove the intrinsic inefficiency of the voluntary system. They are indeed so obvious and powerful, that in spite of the prejudices against *functionarism*, (a nickname for the opposite system which does not seem to have taken,) the payment of administrative functionaries has every where extended as civilization has advanced. There are some administrative offices, as that of member of an English town-council or French departmental-council, to which these reasons are not applicable. The possession of such an office confers a local distinction, which, without pay, is naturally an object of ambition; and since his duties are controlling and negative, rather than active and positive, they do not demand from the occupant a large sacrifice of his time. But every administrative office demanding much labour, or merely demanding qualifications which are products of much labour, ought to be adequately paid; and to expect that such an office will be efficiently discharged without an adequate salary, were nearly as absurd as to call upon private workmen to work without wages. In all countries, (as, for example, France,) in which considerable fortunes are extremely rare, the same reasoning is applicable to all the higher offices demanding the like labour or the like qualifications. Even in countries in which such fortunes are numerous, offices of this character ought to be adequately paid. If they were filled by wealthy occupants, ostentatiously giving their services without pay, the opulent classes would sanction the antipathy with which *functionarism* is frequently regarded. The lower and paid functionaries would therefore be regarded by the multitude with no friendly or respectful feeling; and since an administrative system cannot be efficient, if those who work it are disliked or

contemned, the substantial interests of the country would be sacrificed to a small saving, and to the vanity or fastidiousness of the rich.

The supposed economy of the voluntary system is a mere illusion. An inefficient administration of public affairs, (as, for example, justice or revenue,) costs the country, by direct consequence, and by its effect on the sources of production, infinitely more than can possibly be saved by working the administrative machine on the voluntary principle. It is indeed of the highest importance, that a severe economy, pushed to scrupulosity and pedantry, should regulate the number and appointments of administrative functionaries. The direct consequences of such an economy are nearly insensible; since all that could be saved in any country, by suppressing needless offices and pruning excessive salaries, would be but a drop in the bucket as compared with the national wealth. But the remote and general consequences of a needlessly expensive administration, can hardly be exaggerated. The prodigal expenditure and breach of moral trust, commended to general imitation by the high example of the state, lower the respect of its subjects for honest frugality and industry; and, by thus perverting and abasing their moral feelings and habits, strike at the sources of the national wealth, and at the main basis of the general well-being.

A well-ordered administrative system, efficiently worked by well-paid functionaries, and co-extensive with the genuine wants of the country, is certainly an expensive machine. But, after all, what is the cost of this indispensable instrument, as compared with that of the warlike, or the perverse economical policy, with which governments, wantonly or reluctantly, oppress and plague their subjects? Nations squandering their means on such pernicious fooleries, and starving the beneficent institutions necessary to their safety and welfare, offer a spectacle which is melancholy enough. To those who care for the dignity as well as the happiness of their kind, it is all the more melancholy for being consummately ridiculous.

2. Assuming that the payment of administrative services is an imperative condition of efficient administration, we revert to the alleged tendency of centralization to multiply functionaries beyond the wants of the public.

Comparing a centralized government paying its functionaries, with an uncentralized government pursuing the same policy, the intrinsic advantage, in respect to the cost of the administration, lies (it appears to us) on the side of the former. Where the government is centralized, the distribution of the administrative functions is orderly; it is, therefore, comparatively easy, without

harming the efficiency of the administrative system, to cumulate functions in one and the same functionary; and, since the regularity and the comparative simplicity of the system lay it bare to discerning observation and criticism, it is subject to the purifying operation of an intelligent public opinion. Where the government is not centralized, the organization of the administrative system is crude and confused; there are no facilities for cumulating functions without damage to its general efficiency; and, since its disorderly and barbarous structure covers it with mystery which none but the initiated can penetrate, it is impervious to the observation and effective censure of the intelligent portion of the general public. In respect of its intrinsic tendencies, (which may indeed be checked by extrinsic causes,) such an administrative system, or rather administrative chaos, is a teeming hotbed of profusion and corruption.

That the countries ruled by centralized governments suffer from a needless multiplication of paid functionaries, is not disputed. The evil, however, arises from causes extrinsic to centralization. One of the main causes, in all those countries, is the over-governing with which they are oppressed; for, by needlessly enlarging the sphere of government-functions, it needlessly increases the number of government functionaries. Another cause peculiar, perhaps, to France, (and to which we can only allude,) is a trait in the character of the French people which offers an interesting subject to historico-psychological inquiry;—that love of proportion or *symmetry*, which gives such matchless excellence to the composition and style of their great prose writings; but which too often leads them, in public business, to sacrifice the ends of method to an exquisite exactitude of means. The tendency of this disposition (as may be easily conceived) is, to limit the activity of each functionary to his proper or formal department; to prevent the cumulation of functions (however commodious and economical) in one and the same functionary; and, consequently, to multiply the number of functionaries beyond the wants of the public. Another cause, common to all those countries, is the disposition to trust to *numbers*, (especially in the administration of justice,) as a preventive of culpable malversation, and a security for correctness of decision. This disposition leads naturally to a needless multiplication of functionaries in all the branches of the administration. It leads especially to a vicious complexity in the structure of the judicial system; to a needless lengthening of formal appeals; a needless number of appellate courts; a needless multiplication of the judges attached to each tribunal. This disposition, however, has not the remotest connexion with centralized and regular

government; but is derived from the crude conceptions entertained by barbarous ages, concerning the nature of the securities for upright and efficient administration. Another cause, common to all those countries, is the revolutionary state of Europe during the last half century; the French government especially, during the entire period, having been engaged in a struggle with extreme and subversive factions. Hence a disposition in the governments, and especially in the French government, to resort to every expedient which promised peace for the moment; although the expedient, in its remoter and general consequences, might tend to weaken their power, and even to shake their stability. Hence a disposition (and a venial disposition) in the governments of those countries, to gain supporters by corruption; and more particularly, by multiplying administrative offices beyond the public wants, and filling them with reference to the influence rather than the fitness of the occupants. Since parliamentary government has been introduced into France, the imperious necessity, incumbent on the chiefs of the administration, of getting a majority in the Deputies, has led to similar abuses of the administrative establishments. But this is a consequence of parliamentary institutions, combining with other causes in the general state of the country, and not of the centralization to which it has often been ascribed.

Abstracting causes extrinsic to centralization, it is not the *interest* of a centralized government to multiply functionaries beyond the wants of the country. By this abuse of the administrative institutions, it disgusts and alienates the intelligent and impartial public; and, in civilised communities, it is only in their esteem and considerate attachment, that any government, at the long run, can find efficient support. Nor, by this shameful expedient, does it accomplish its particular purpose. By bribing and gaining a few opponents, it raises up candidates for its corrupt favour, far surpassing in numbers its limited means of corruption. For one friend whose doubtful attachment it buys, it makes to itself, of the suitors whom it disappoints, a score of implacable enemies.

III. We proceed to the supposed inconsistency of centralization with local governments of local and popular origin. This subject we shall consider, with the brevity incumbent upon us, from the following points of view:—1. The advantages accruing from such governments. 2. Their tendency to clash with the central authority; the consequent tendency of existing centralized governments to confine their power and influence within too narrow limits; and the opinion hence arising, that centralization is not compatible with them. 3. The means of recon-

cing the advantages accruing from them, with the indispensable power and influence of the central authority.

1. It is expedient that general laws (or laws calculated for the country at large) should be adapted to local peculiarities arising from physical or moral causes. Through local governments of local origin, clothed with appropriate powers of subordinate legislation and administration, these adaptations of general and indiscriminating laws are made by persons familiar with the localities;—by persons, therefore, who have greater aptitudes for this particular function, than are commonly possessed by persons of higher general qualifications, whose knowledge of the localities is less intimate and minute. With reference to objects which are not limited to localities, but deeply concern the interests of the general community, it is not less expedient that such governments should partake largely of the popular element; that a considerable fraction of the population in each locality should take a considerable part in the administration of the local affairs, or in the appointment and control of the local administrators. By local governments popularly constituted, a practical knowledge of public affairs, and a habit of caring for public interests, are diffused from the several localities through the country at large. Under a supreme government popularly constituted, this political training and public spirit are of great immediate importance;—since all or many of those who partake in the government of localities are also partakers in the sovereign power. Under a monarchy or narrow aristocracy, this political training and public spirit are more important still; since they powerfully affect the practice of the sovereign authority, give it the substance and spirit of a free government, and supply to a large extent the want of constitutional guarantees. Though local governments of the character in question were imperfect instruments of local administration, they would amply make up for this partial inconvenience, by their tendency to invigorate the mind, and elevate the morality of the country.

2. The intrinsic tendency of such governments to clash with the central authority, is enhanced by a cause which still operates although its origin is remote. Almost every extensive country is an aggregate of units, which, in substance at least, were once independent states; but which have been formed into one independent state by a series of causes arising through many ages. Long after the aggregation had been finally accomplished, these once independent units cherished the memory of their independence. The subordinate authorities of local origin, by whom they were administered in their character of localities, asserted their independence as far as they could; and in the exercise of

their political powers, they regarded the central authority as a foreign conqueror from whose unnatural yoke it was lawful for them to escape. By this cause, acting through ages, an aversion to the central authority, and a disposition to resist or thwart it, has been deeply impressed upon localities; and even in countries (as, for example, France) in which the ancient localities have been effaced, the feelings engendered by a bygone order of things still operate to no inconsiderable extent. Hence a barbarous tendency in the populations and governments of localities to sever their local interests from the interests of the general community. Hence the difficulty with which they ascend in practice to the notion or feeling of a *common country*. Hence the difficulty with which they understand or feel that they hold their political powers as trustees for the central authority; and that even in reference to their genuine local interests, they ought to abstain from using them to the detriment of the common weal. In France and England, the old disparate units of which the country is composed appear to be perfectly fused; but the exclusive local patriotism descending from barbarous ages, still lingers in the former and even in the latter. For example, the vulgar notions (or, at least, feelings) about the nature and objects of parliamentary government, are still deeply tinged with this miserable spirit. According to these notions, the Chamber of Deputies or the House of Commons is substantially a congress of ambassadors from the several localities which elect them; *not* an assembly representing the country at large, though chosen by electoral bodies circumscribed by local limits. Accordingly, it is often the scene of a scramble between the electoral localities, as represented by their several delegates—each of the localities doing as much as the jealousy of the others will allow—to adapt the legislation and administration of the country to its narrow conceptions of its local interests.

In France, up to the Revolution of 1789, this exclusive local patriotism was backed by the excessive privileges which resided in the provincial and other local authorities. The obstacles to the central authority and to the general interests, which arose from so mischievous a spirit, armed with such formidable powers, determined the Constituent Assembly to abolish the ancient localities, and to give the territory a division consistent with national government. With reference to its own objects, and its own consequences, the change was a great good; though, like the other measures of that inexperienced Assembly, it was marred by the precipitation and injustice inseparable from a violent reform. We heartily sympathize with M. de Cormenin, in his contempt of the silly regrets for the former provinces and their

privileges;—regrets which are affected by foolish partisans who are aiming at an impossible restoration of the ancient order of things; or by coxcombs, who, knowing nothing of the middle ages, would push us back from our present to a still less civilized condition. The obstacles to the central authority and to the general interests, which had arisen from the ancient localities, begot an undiscerning suspicion of local governments. The highly centralized government which sprung from the Revolution, was disposed to confine their functions within too narrow limits; and even to subject the exercise of these insufficient powers to an excessive and vexatious control. From this disposition of that government, and from a similar disposition in other centralized governments, has arisen the mistake with which we are presently concerned; although the disposition arose in France, and also in other countries, from causes which are not inherent in centralization.

Looking at the reason of the thing, there is no inconsistency in centralization, with local governments of local and popular origin.

The interests of the localities are special or general;—those which are respectively peculiar to the several localities, and those which they have in common. The special and general interests of all the localities are identical with the interests of the country. The sum of its interests is composed of those of its parts; and such of its interests as are distinguished from those of its parts are nothing but interests common to the latter. Accordingly, if a centralized government consulted the interests of the country, it would give to the local governments the constitutions and attributes which would tend to promote to the utmost the special interests of the localities. It consults, also, its own interests, by pursuing the same policy. By this policy, it satisfies the wants and wishes of the intelligent and impartial public. By this policy, it gives political education and public spirit to the bulk of its subjects; and by thus extending the number of the intelligent and impartial public, it enlarges the basis on which it permanently rests. Centralization, if consistent with its ends, promotes the interests of the localities, as well understood. It subordinates their interests to those of the country. But by this, it merely subordinates their peculiar and lower, to their common and higher interests.

Localities, however, have special interests which are illusory and spurious. These conflict with the interests of the country, and, at the long run, with genuine local interests;—since such interests would decline, if the interests of the country decayed. In these illusory interests, and the exclusive local patriotism

from which they arise, lies the difficulty of determining the constitution and attributes of the local governments. For these illusions, as for other social evils, the spread of sound opinions on economical, political, and other social questions, is the only effectual cure. Till these opinions are more extensively diffused, local institutions which are deeply rooted in such prejudices ought to be touched by governments with a cautious hand. By handling them roughly, a government would defeat the ends at which centralization aims; provoking a dangerous resistance on the part of the localities, to every plan, however intrinsically good, for bringing the local institutions into harmony with the interests of the country.

3. The conditions of centralization, in reference to local governments of local and popular origin, may be briefly stated (as appears from our preliminary outline) in some such terms as the following: the attributes of such governments must be limited and specified; and must not consist (like those of the local governments there analysed) in infinite aggregates of powers: their respective territories (or rather their respective populations) must not be sufficiently extensive to give them a moral weight rendering their dependence precarious. With a view to the interests of the country, as well as the influence of the central authority, the following limitation (naturally suggested by the immediately foregoing considerations) ought, moreover, to be put upon their functions: their specified powers ought to be limited to matters in which they are *special*ly concerned. There is no reason whatever for empowering any one locality to meddle with matters regarding the country at large;—matters, assuredly, in which it is deeply concerned, but in which all other localities have the same interest.

As the special interests of different localities differ considerably, the aggregates of powers, granted to the local governments, cannot be exactly fashioned on a common model. Abstracting these differences between individual localities, a definition of the nature and extent of those aggregates of powers would involve an elaborate inquiry. In relation, moreover, to any country in particular, the abstract definition would need modifications which would swell the inquiry to the size of a volume. Any attempt, within our narrow space, to determine the nature and extent of those aggregates of powers, would, therefore, be hopeless and idle. Accordingly, we shall limit our notice of this large and difficult subject to a few general and concise suggestions.

The immediate end of local government is a good administration of local affairs: the social education of the country at large, is, or ought to be, its ulterior and paramount object.

It appears to us, that the friends of centralization make a mistake which seriously damages their cause. In reference to the attributes of local governments, they look too much to the immediate end of the institution, and think too little of its remoter and larger purpose. There has been (for example) in France, till within the last few years, an excessive disposition to limit the powers of such governments, and to subject them to the control of the general administration. In respect to the immediate end, the disposition may be justified or excused; for, owing to their crude conceptions of local interests, the local governments, if not so limited and checked, might frequently abuse their powers, to the detriment of the country and the localities. But by this grudging and jealous policy, the remoter and larger purpose is nearly or altogether defeated. It may prevent the authorities of local origin from abusing their powers. But it also perpetuates their indifference about public interests, and their ignorance of public affairs; since no man enters with heart and mind into any business committed to his care, if nothing is left to his discretion, and he is treated with systematic mistrust. The policy, moreover, thwarts the ends of centralization, by a more direct and obvious consequence; for, by offending the self-love of the local authorities and populations, it tends to set them in opposition to the central authority.

If local patriotism were more enlightened, there would be little difficulty in determining the attributes which ought to be given to local governments. Elaborate limitations of their powers and discretion would become superfluous; since the local authorities and populations would care for their common country, as much as they care for their localities. With their actually short-sighted conceptions of their special interests, the difficulty is unquestionably great. The line of demarcation between general and special interests cannot be drawn with precision. To give to the local governments all the discretionary powers which local interests require, is to give them extensive means of harming the country; and, by consequence, the localities themselves.

Till sound opinions on social questions are more extensively diffused, the immediate and remote objects of local governments cannot be reconciled completely. Something, however, may be done in the way of legislation to obviate the difficulty; or rather, to obviate the narrow conceptions of local interests from which the difficulty arises. With a view to this purpose, various plans of local government have been tried or suggested; and to the more remarkable of these plans we will now advert.

According to one of them, the active government of every locality would be placed in a functionary or functionaries of the

general administration ;—these active authorities being bound, in every matter of importance and difficulty, to ask the preliminary *advice* of the authorities of local origin. The latter, therefore, would have nothing more than what is commonly called a consultative voice. According to another, the active government of every locality would be placed in authorities of local origin ; these being bound, however, in every matter of importance and difficulty, to await the special *authorization* of the appropriate department of the general administration. According to a third, the active government of every locality would be placed in authorities of local origin ; the general administration having a consultative voice. Specified administrative powers, calculated as well as might be to prevent the administrators from abusing them, would be given to the local authorities ; these being bound, however, to ask the preliminary advice of the appropriate department of the general administration, in every matter of importance and difficulty.

The first and second would have the inconvenience to which we have already adverted. As the authorities of local origin would be treated with systematic mistrust, those authorities, with the rest of the local population, would probably be alienated from the central government. As little or nothing would be left to their discretion, the local government, though securing a good administration of local affairs, would do little or nothing for the social education of the country.

By the third, the immediate and remote ends of local government would probably be reconciled to no inconsiderable extent. The obligation of the local administrators to consult the general administration, would be a considerable (though a merely moral) security against their abusing their powers. Their habitual exercise of considerable discretionary powers, would give them a political education, and a care for public interests. By their habitual contact with the chief departments of the general administration, this important effect of their unshackled activity would be greatly enhanced. As those departments are constantly occupied with all the sections of the country, their experience of local affairs is far more varied than that of the local authorities in any particular locality ; and being accustomed to regard such affairs in relation to the general interests, they are naturally superior to the local partialities and prejudices by which such authorities are as naturally blinded and misled. The results of their varied experience and dispassionate judgments would be constantly offered to the consideration of the local governments ; and, as coming in the shape of advice rather than the form of command, would find a ready acceptance with the local govern-

ments and populations, and insensibly correct their misconceptions of their special interests.

IV. Under certain centralized governments, the lower functionaries of the general administration, as well as the local governments of local origin, are controlled to excess by the higher functionaries of the former. Instead of being left to act on his own discretion and under responsibility for abuse of his powers, the inferior functionary, in applying rules to cases, must often wait for authority from the appropriate principal department. Hence, a long correspondence between the functionary and the department, before the former can dispose of the case; and hence vexatious delay, and often irreparable damage, to the parties whom the case concerns. There arises, moreover, from this overlaying of the administration with precautions against abuse, a needless increase of administrative business, with a proportionally needless multiplication of administrative functionaries. So far, however, are these excessive precautions from inhering in centralization, that they tend to defeat its objects. In the first place, they turn the time and attention of the principal administrative departments from their proper business. To lay down rules for the guidance of its inferior functionaries, to superintend their administration of these rules, and to enforce their responsibilities on their abusing their discretionary powers, is the appropriate office of such a department; and it ought to abstain from acting immediately on specific or particular cases, unless they are pregnant with consequences of extraordinary magnitude, or unless they are so anomalous that the rules are inapplicable to them. In the next place, these excessive precautions, by the delays and vexations which they inflict, tend to alienate the people from the central authority; and, by complicating the administrative system, and tending to conceal it from the observation of the intelligent public, they weaken the best security against the abuses of its functionaries, and the best means of correcting its defects.

From this preposterous diligence of administrative departments, we proceed to a practice closely analogous to it, and more inconsistent with the ends at which centralization aims. Sovereign governments (as well as subordinate authorities) frequently neglect functions which they ought to exercise directly, for the direct exercise of functions which they might delegate to advantage. There would not be room in the general view of our subject, to which we are confined by the necessary limits of an article, for any attempt whatever to draw the line of demarcation, by which the two classes of functions are faintly separated; but, to complete that general view, (or to mark out the extent of our

subject,) we venture to advert, in conclusion, to the difficult matter in question.

It appears to us, that a sovereign government promotes its power as well as the interests of its subjects, by confining the direct exercise of its legislative and administrative functions to matters of general and permanent concern; and, consequently, that it ought to delegate all its functions which are strictly or substantially administrative, excepting in a few cases (principally regarding its foreign relations) which fall within the reason for its legislative and administrative activity.

It appears to us, moreover, (for reasons which our necessary limits will hardly allow us even to indicate,) that the two following measures might be adopted in England with equal advantage to the country and the central authority.

We have already adverted to the *specific* legislation, (or legislation by *private* acts,) which is now done directly by the British Parliament. It appears to us, that this legislation is just as detrimental to the power and influence of the sovereign authority, as to the interests of the parties whom it affects directly, and to those interests of the country which it affects by remote consequence; that the function ought to be delegated (with such exceptions as a close scrutiny would suggest) to subordinate functionaries, endowed with the judicial qualifications which the exercise of it demands; and that this measure would be justified by numerous and weighty analogies, as well as by high considerations of public utility.

It appears to us, moreover, that the great and growing inconveniences of the *general* Parliamentary legislation urgently call for a measure which might be justified by similar analogies;—namely, the appointment of a Permanent Commission, composed of experienced lawyers, to examine and report upon bills submitted to either of the Houses. The functions of this Commission, as we conceive them, may be briefly indicated. It would have to consider and report, whether the purpose (or purposes) of any proposed law were not virtually accomplished by the existing law of the land; to suggest the provisions by which that purpose might be best carried into effect; and to give the law the form and expression which would render its purpose and provisions as definite and clear as possible.

The want of this institution, or some institution analogous to it, has necessarily led in England, (and, indeed, in all countries,) to the legislation, judicial or direct, of Courts of Justice;—a legislation bad in itself, and derogating from the proper office of the sovereign authority; but arising from causes much misconceived by partial advocates of Codes, and even by many historians.

of positive systems of law. In reference to the statute law, made with the advice and assistance of the Permanent Commission, the institution would prevent the necessity for those so-called interpretations, with which Courts of Justice, in their own despite, have helped the lame productions of the sovereign legislature. The institution would insensibly form, in the members of the Commission, a body of men equal to the urgent work of reducing the law to a Code. The frightful and accumulating chaos of the written and unwritten law, will, sooner or later, force this measure upon Parliament; but unless care be taken, before the necessity is imminent, for the formation of a body of men competent to the arduous business, it will probably be done in a manner to aggravate the existing evil. Merely practical lawyers are often consummate in the art of applying positive principles; but not being called upon, by the nature of their avocations, to conceive the law as a rational system, they could not conceive the comparatively simple expression to which it might really be reduced. Merely theoretical lawyers are equally incompetent to the business; as wanting a sufficient acquaintance with the details of the law, and that dexterity in applying principles which nothing but practice can impart. The members of a Commission of Legislation, composed as we have suggested, would possess the minute knowledge and practical dexterity which are naturally acquired by experienced lawyers; and, from the nature of their office, they would as naturally combine with these faculties a faculty of a higher order. Their office would give them the talent of conceiving the details of the law, as forming the related parts of an internally coherent whole; and *this* talent, combined with minute knowledge and practical dexterity, is *the* talent needed for the work of reducing the law to a Code.

The last consideration suggests an analogy which will concisely illustrate the subject of the present article. If we exclude the conditions of centralization which regard the constitution and functions of local governments, we may say that centralized government is synonymous with regular administration. But this is related to administration not completely extricated from primeval disorder, as a body of law, arranged in a well-made Code, to a body of law, immersed in its natural chaos.

NOTE to the Article in No. CLXVIII. on the 'Corn-Laws of Athens and Rome.'

IN the above Article, it is stated, that in the time of Augustus 200,000 persons in Rome received each sixty *modii* of corn a year. The total quantity of corn distributed is thus, by an oversight, computed to be 1,200,000, instead of 12,000,000 *modii*. The latter quantity is equal to about 375,000 quarters.

NOTE to the Article in No. CLXX. on the 'Lives of Eminent Lawyers.'

WHEN alluding, in the above Article, to the sentence of death pronounced by Sir Matthew Hale, in 1664, upon two women accused of Witchcraft, we happened to mention that the Repeal of the Penal Laws against this imaginary crime 'was, even so late as 1743, denounced by the Presbytery in Edinburgh as a 'national sin.' Of the fact that such a denunciation took place, there can be no doubt; but we ought perhaps to have made it clear that it did not proceed from a Presbytery of the *Established Church*. That we have been thought so to mean is, as we are assured by a Clergyman of that Church, who has addressed us very earnestly upon the subject, the construction put upon the passage—hurtfully to the feelings, as he avers, of many of his brethren. We therefore think ourselves called upon to state, that the repeal of these Penal Laws—which took place in 1736—was neither opposed, nor afterwards condemned, as a national 'sin,' by any Judicatory of the National Church. But we have no intention whatever to institute any invidious comparison, when we now state, that this noted denunciation was the act, not of the *Established*, but of the *Secession Church*, or *Seceders*. We shall accordingly dwell upon the point no further than is necessary to remove all ambiguity from the passage complained of. The fact, then, is, that in February 1743, the 'Associate Presbytery'—meaning the Presbytery of the *Secession*, or *Seceders*—passed, and soon thereafter published an 'Act for renewing the National Covenant;' in which there is a solemn acknowledgment of sins, and vow to renounce them;

among which is specified 'The Repeal of the Penal Statutes against Witchcraft, contrary to the express laws of God, and for which a Holy God may be provoked, in a way of righteous judgment, to leave those who are already ensnared to be hardened more and more, and to permit Satan to tempt and seduce others to the same wicked and dangerous snare.'

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